Sarfoji Rajah 1817

AN INQUIRY INTO THE ORIGIN AND ANTIQUITY OF THE LUES VENEREA;

WITH

OBSERVATIONS

ON ITS

INTRODUCTION AND PROGRESS

IN THE

ISLANDS OF THE SOUTH SEAS.

TO WHICH IS ADDED,

A SHORT VIEW of the VARIOUS REMEDIES recommended in that DISTEMPER, from its first APPEARANCE in EUROPE to these Times:

WITH

GENERAL REMARKS on the present received MODES of TREATMENT.

By WILLIAM TURNBULL,

SURGEON OF HIS MAJESTY'S NAVY, AND IN GREAT EASTCHEAP.

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TO

WILLIAM BLIZZARD, Esq. F.S.A.

THE FOLLOWING

INQUIRY

IS INSCRIBED,

AS A MARK OF ESTEEM,

BY HIS MUCH OBLIGED

HUMBLE SERVANT,

London,
April 25, 1786.

The AUTHOR.

PREFACE.

THE following Sheets were never intended for publication, but written merely for the purpose of being read before a Medical Society in this Metropolis. Influenced by the flattering marks of attention with which they were received, together with the solicitations of some of my respectable friends, I have been induced to lay them before the Public, and submit to their candid and impartial examination.

It may probably appear extraordinary and unimportant, to revive the discussion of a subject so often a matter of debate, and in the opinion of most men now satisfactorily dismissed: and it may likewise seem superfluous in the eyes of many, to offer to the public inspection the history of a disease

which

which has been ſo amply treated of by Dr. Aſtruc, in his operoſe volume.—Had he been leſs prolix, and more connected and arranged, theſe obſervations would have never appeared: but the prolixity and abſtruſeneſs of this moſt elaborate and ingenious performance, have been the cauſe of its being little read or attended to.

It has been urged by ſome as an inſtance of the inutility of attending to the hiſtory of the Venereal, or of any other diſtemper —that admitting we poſſeſſed a perfect knowledge of its hiſtory, origin, &c. they would avail us very little in the method of cure, nor would they point out one ſuperior to that we are at preſent acquainted with; and that inſtead of perplexing ourſelves with new theories and new hypotheſes on this ſubject, are better calculated for the oſtentation of authors, than promoting and diſſeminating uſeful knowledge, it would ſerve more for general good, to attend to well eſtabliſhed rules contain-

ing ſound practice, and better methods of curing diſeaſes. Granting this to be in a great meaſure true, yet ignorance of the hiſtory of this diſtemper, as far as it is known, would be inexcuſable in men who profeſs one of the moſt liberal and moſt extenſive of the ſciences; in which their knowledge cannot be too univerſal or diffuſed, were they to arrive at the age of an Antidiluvian, and poſſeſſed greater perſeverance and abilities than commonly fall to the lot of man—all theſe would be inſufficient to make them completely ſkilled in every branch of medicine, as it includes the whole circle of the Sciences—ſo limited, and ſo confined is human underſtanding.

But the hiſtory of the Venereal Diſeaſe cannot appear altogether ſo trivial, when we conſider that the hiſtory of diſeaſes is not an inconſiderable part of the hiſtory of human nature; and as an elegant modern Writer

Writer * obſerves, "Intimately connected
"with the progreſs of luxury, intempe-
"rance, and every other deviation from the
"ſimple laws of the animal œconomy.
"And, therefore, in aſcertaining the period
"of the firſt appearance of any diſeaſe, but
"particularly of one which originates from,
"and tends to annihilate the very ſource of
"human exiſtence, we make one impor-
"tant ſtep, not only in the general hiſtory
"of the progreſs of manners, but even in
"the hiſtory of the world."

Beſides, there ſeems to be an innate propenſity in man to ſearch for cauſes, from ſeeing effects †; they are proportionally eager after cauſes, as they appear the more dark and inexplicable.

* Dr. Martin Wall, of Oxford.

† This axiom was evidently verified in the Lues Venerea; for on the appearance of that malady in our hemiſphere, the attention of the ingenious and learned ſeemed to be totally abſorbed in attempting to trace it to its fountain head, and explore its principal ſource.

This

This principle of curiosity may be called the soul of discovery; without it, every improvement, every vestige of science would soon be enveloped in ignorance and superstition, and finally obliterated. When this spirit of excitement, this cement of society withdraws itself from kingdoms and empires, however polished, or however refined, they sink by degrees into their primeval state of rudeness and barbarism.

Had this publication been intended solely for the perusal of the medical reader, I might have been prompted to have entered more fully into the practical part *; but I had in view as much the amusement of the private gentleman, as the information of those in the profession

* Did my inclination even lead me, it would now be superfluous to enlarge on this part of my subject; for since this publication has been sent to the press, that very eminent and much experienced surgeon, Mr. Hunter, has favoured the world with a quarto, on the treatment of the Venereal Disease.

—who are, we may preſume, poſſeſſed of an equal ſhare of curioſity, and equally deſirous to be made acquainted with the variety of conjectures and opinions formed by the moſt diſtinguiſhed philoſophers, hiſtorians, phyſicians, poets, and divines, relative to the nature and introduction of this deſtructive diſtemper, this peſt of mankind.

It was my intention to have annexed to theſe obſervations a few experiments which I had made, in order to aſcertain the effects of the Venereal Virus on different animals, but they ſeemed to me ſo unſatisfactory as not to merit attention. The experiments were made on the following animals, viz.—The dog, cat, and rabbit. From the reſult of theſe, it appeared that none of them were the leaſt ſuſceptible to the Venereal Poiſon, either when given into the ſtomach*, or applied to the organs ſub-

* The following accidental occurrence tends to elucidate the inferences drawn from the experiments made

ſubſervient to generation, or to inciſion made on any exterior parts of their bodies. Thence we may conclude that its effects are confined to man alone: he is the victim devoted for its rage. But why it is ſo, and the reſt of the creation exempted from

made on the ſtomach of the above animals, and likewiſe to prove that neither the ſyphilitic or gonorrhœal virus has any effect upon the ſtomach of man.

In the year 1781, a Captain of the Navy (at Portſmouth) being under my care for a large Venereal Ulcer on the glans, accompanied with a conſiderable diſcharge from the urethra—his cuſtom was frequently throughout the day, to bathe the parts with warm milk and water, in which he ſometimes put a little ſpirits. A ſeaman waiting upon him one morning, and being placed in the room where the Captain had been in the evening before, and ſeeing a glaſs rummer half full of this mixture (which had been uſed for the purpoſe abovementioned) and taking it for rum and milk, drank it off. About two hours after, my patient getting out of bed and inquiring after the milk and water—the ſailor told him, with ſome heſitation, 'he hoped there was 'no harm, but that he had drank it.' The Captain alarmed for the conſequences, ſent immediately for me; I came in two hours after, and four from the accident, and ordered him a vomit, and never any thing diſagreeable occurred.

them

them, the utmoſt ſtretch of human inveſtigation will probably never be able to diſcover.

In order, however, to render this diſſertation more acceptable to the practitioner, and of greater utility, I have added a ſhort hiſtory of the various remedies recommended from the period of the firſt appearance of the diſeaſe in Europe, to theſe times; and have thrown in ſome general obſervations on the different modes of treatment at preſent in vogue These, I flatter myſelf, will not appear altogether unworthy of peruſal, as they are the reſult of obſervation, and a pretty extenſive experience;—my late ſituation in the Navy having afforded a large field for Venereal practice.

If I have, in any degree, been inſtrumental in exciting thoſe who are better calculated to treat of my ſubject, in a more enlarged and extended ſcale, and whoſe geniuſes are better adapted to the ſpirit of inquiry and inveſtigation, the intention of theſe pages is fully accompliſhed.

AN

AN INQUIRY INTO THE ORIGIN AND ANTIQUITY OF THE LUES VENEREA.

A VARIETY of opinions have prevailed in determining at what æra the Lues Venerea made its appearance in Europe; but it is now the general belief, that it was unknown in any European kingdom before the close of the fifteenth century; and was then imported from the islands adjacent to the Continent of South America, by some of the companions of Columbus; having been communicated to them at the period when that enterprising adventurer first explored that part of

the world. Their accounts of it ſtrike us with wonder and amazement; from theſe it appears, that it was a common diſtemper amongſt thoſe iſlands, but particularly in Hiſpaniola, where it was epidemic and contagious like the itch; and that it was in a manner hereditary to the natives, who not only contracted it by venery, but it likewiſe broke out ſpontaneouſly upon them; owing, as has been ſuppoſed by many Spaniſh authors of conſequence, particularly Gonzalvo Fernando de Oviedo*, who reſided many years among them, to proceed from their groſs and intemperate manner of living, united to that ſloth and inactivity, the natural effects of a hot climate. They further inform us, that they were in other reſpects a very healthy people; they ſeemed, agreeable to the accounts of a late celebrated writer †, to be every way exempt from many of the diſtempers which afflict civilized and po-

* Ovied. Hiſt. General. & Natural. de Ind. Occident.

† Robertſon Hiſt. America, Vol. 2. Book viii.

liſhed

liſhed nations. None of the maladies which are the immediate offspring of luxury ever viſited them; and they had no names in their language, by which to diſtinguiſh this numerous train of adventitious misfortunes. That in return for the compliment they preſented the Spaniards, were infected with the ſmall-pox *, a diſeaſe conſiderably more diſagreeable and deſtructive amongſt them, than the Venereal Diſtemper ever was with us, even in its worſt condition.

Previous to its being ſo univerſally diſtinguiſhed in Europe, it had got ſome footing in Italy in 1493, but not raging rapidly was paid little attention to. Two years after, the memorable ſiege of Naples occurred, which gave it an opportunity of being more generally diffuſed throughout the French army, who were there waging

* Le Clerc, ſpeaking of the Venereal Diſeaſe, obſerves, that the Spaniards, upon their firſt expedition to America, brought home from thence this infectious diſorder, and ſoon after carried over another (the ſmall-pox) of equal contagion, to whoſe rage, many Princes both of the Houſes of Mexico and Peru fell a ſacrifice.

war, headed by the victorious Charles VIII. against the combined forces of Spain and Naples; and at a very short period after, the infection was propagated to their neighbours on this side of the water. The reader will agree with me in observing, that the votaries of Venus have great reason to curse the fatal moment it first shed its baneful influence among them: happy would it have been for mankind, if the exuberant profusion with which the mines of Mexico and Peru pour forth their inexhaustible treasure, had been yet unexplored, millions of lives would have been preserved, and Europe, though perhaps in a more indigent state, would have remained ignorant of so direful a malady. Not only all Europe felt its destructive effects, but it soon urged its way into the remotest corners of Asia and Africa; and, in short, where man was, there it penetrated—* Even the lofty and consecrated walls

* So wicked, scandalous, and detestable, were the practices of the cloistered ecclesiastics, that in the days of

walls of convents and nunneries, were unable to prevent its acceſs; which led to ſuch diſcoveries, as the ſecreſy of conventicle intrigue were anxious to conceal within the limits of their cloiſters.—This ſeems to have been its routine of communication to the whole world. In the the earlieſt appearance of this diſtemper in Europe, the ſufferings of the firſt victims were intolerably grievous; for, according to ſome ancient writers, it occaſioned the hair and the nails to fall off, and produced other ſymptoms, ſo numerous and dreadful, as to to be unparalleled in hiſtory. It ſpread ſo univerſal a terror and conſternation among all ranks of people, that the ſick were ſuffered to periſh alone,

of the beautiful but unfortunate Mary Queen of Scots, an Archbiſhop having frequently viſited the inner apartments of a celebrated abbeſs, of her contracted a diſeaſe of ſo dreadful a nature, that his phyſicians pronounced it incurable.—To the ſkill of a famous Italian aſtrologer, who had brought a remedy for the diſeaſe from Tuſcany, where it had firſt appeared, ſome years before, was the moſt reverend prelate indebted for a cure.

Vide de Vita Cardani.

in ſuch miſery, as till that period they had been entirely unacquainted with; and the experience of the phyſicians furniſhed them with no remedy that could counteract its malignity. In the firſt breaking out of this diſtemper, as well as ſince, there were many who would not attend to reaſoning on the ſubject; but took an infinite deal of pains to prove, that this diſeaſe was known both by the Greeks and Arabians; but imperfectly deſcribed under the names of difficult kinds of leproſies, exulcerations, and other cutaneous affections—Advocates for this mode of reaſoning, may indeed ſhew us their great reading, but, at the ſame time, convince us of their want of diſcernment and attention; for let thoſe that entertain the above opinion, peruſe the caſes related by Gaſpar Torella, a celebrated phyſician of Valencia in Spain, who lived and practiſed at the firſt eruption of this contagious evil; and compare them with the ſymptoms of elephantiaſis, which are ſo elegantly and accurately depicted by Aræteus and Hali Abbas, will find them

widely

widely different *. It is apparent to the least discerning, who have read with attention the works of the ancients, that there is not the same variety of appearances, the same complication of symptoms, in any one disease to which mankind is exposed, as in this: it was observed to be so peculiar in its nature, and so remarkable in every circumstance attending it, that the majority of the most learned and experienced practitioners, were convinced that it was a new disease; and one with which neither the Greek nor Arabian physicians were at all acquainted †. John

* "Lepra albedo est quæ in exterioribus fit acutis: "& aliquando in quibusdam sine aliis est membris: "non nunquam vero in toto fit corpore interdum ut "totius fit corporis color albus. Quæ in membro est, "si ex mala fit frigida complexione, hæc sunt signa; "quum membrum in quo est, album est colore itidem-"que ejus pili; & si cutis phlebotomo vel certe acu "pungitur, sanguis ab eo non egreditur, sed humiditas "alba."

Hali Abbas Theor. Cap. 16.

† The Jews and Mahometans, who were banished from Spain in the reign of Ferdinand and Isabella, introduced the Venereal Disease into Africa.

Leo, who wrote the Hiſtory of Africa ſoon after this diſtemper was known in that quarter, makes mention, that the ſame notion prevailed there alſo; and in Barbary, its ravages ſpread with ſuch uncontroulable force, that thoſe who were ſo unhappy as to be afflicted, fell either victims to its violence, or, what is infinitely worſe, lingered out the remainder of their wretched exiſtence as ſpectacles of the greateſt miſery.

However, not to conceal any thing that has the leaſt tendency to favor thoſe, who imagine this diſtemper of more ancient date, they may find ſomething to ſtrengthen their hypotheſis in Gordonius, who takes notice of pains and ulcers affecting the penis, together with buboes, which were often the conſequence of promiſcuous coition *: and Gulielmus de Saliceto, in ſpeaking of a bubo, obſerves, "cum accidit homini in virga corruptio, propter

* "Jacere cum muliere, cujus matrix eſt immunda "plena ſanie aut virulenta."

Friend's Hiſt. Phyſ. Vol. II. p. 346.

"con-

"concubitum cum fœda muliere, aut ob "aliam cauſam, itaque corruptio multi-"plicatur & retinetur in virga: unde non "poteſt natúra mundificare virgam aut "locum primo propter ſtrictam viam illius "loci, unde redit, & regurgitat materia "ad locum inguinum propter habilitatem, "loci illius ad recipiendum ſuperfluitatem "quamlibet, & propter affinitatem quam "habent hæc loca ad virgam *." This paſſage from Gordonius comes neareſt to the point, of any we have met with, in favor of the antiquity of the Venereal Diſeaſe; as it appears that he lived in 1270, which was 223 years before it was known in Europe. The indefatigable and ingenious Dr. Aſtruc, has juſtly acquired the higheſt rank in his profeſſion, and ſeems to have underſtoood the nature and hiſtory of this diſtemper ſuperior to any who ever wrote on the ſubject: in his elaborate volume, the opinions of all the writers on the Diſeaſe, from its earliſt ap-

* Gul. de Saliceto Chirurg. Lib. I. Cap. 42. De Apoſtemat. in Inguinibus.

pearance

pearance to his time, are there candidly ſtated.—He was of opinion, that both the Greeks and Romans were total ſtrangers to it, and brings convincing and undeniable proofs to ſupport his doctrine. It is evident (obſerves our admired author *) "from the ſilence of all the phyſicians, "hiſtorians, and poets, from the days of "Hippocrates to the preſent, that no no-"tice was taken of it:" and it is the more aſtoniſhing, as they were ſcrupulouſly accurate in deſcribing every other the moſt trifling and minute diſeaſe that occurred in their times, ſhould omit mentioning ſo remarkable, ſo direful, and ſo uncommon a diſtemper, if it had been ſo frequent among them, as for near three centuries it has been with us †. Even Rome

* Aſtruc, Book I. Chap. 1. on the Venereal Diſeaſe.

† Non in Europa innotuit ante 1493. Quia, 1. Neque à medicis, neque hiſtoricis, neque poeticis ſcriptoribus, ante hoc tempus, deſcribitur. 2. Non eſt Lepra antiquorum. 3. Primi ſcriptores conſentiunt quod morbus antea inauditus fuit. Non in Italia, certis cauſis concurrentibus, germinabat; neque à regionibus

Rome in her greateſt luxury, at the time when ſhe was outrivalling every other nation in diſſipation, when her citizens were addicted to every ſenſual and inordinate gratifications, when they were entirely abandoned to all the exceſſes of unlawful pleaſures, were unacquainted with this diſeaſe, or ſo prolific a ſubject would not have eſcaped the ſatiric pens of a Horace or a Juvenal. Some commentators, indeed, on the firſt mentioned poet, have conſidered the following paſſage as applicable to the Venereal Diſeaſe:

* ——————" Fœda cicatrix
" Setoſam lævi frontem turpaverit oris
" Campanum in morbum in faciem permulta jo-
" catus."

but doubtleſs this is founded on conjecture. I am inclined to believe that the infamous diſeaſe of the Capuans (a people notorious for all manner of debaucheries

gionibus Africæ; ſed ab Hiſpaniola cum Columbo advectus, bello Neapolitano ſe primò manifeſtabat.

Home's Principia Medicinæ.

* Horat. Lib. I. Sat. 5.

and

and diſorderly pleaſures) was no more than what is daily produced in conſequence of too liberally ſacrificing at the ſhrine of Bacchus; as it is no uncommon ſight in theſe times, to ſee carbuncled faces amongſt the votaries of that inebriating deity; and perhaps the foul ſcar on Meſſius Cicerrus's forehead, alluded to in the quotation, may have been occaſioned from a ſimilar cauſe. Others again, with more propriety, have ſuppoſed that he was hinting at a common cutaneous diſtemper in that climate, which the Romans called Impetigo, and is at this preſent day very prevalent in Italy.—Valeſius too, imagined, that the ſcorbutic eruption on the face of the emperor Tiberius, as related by Tacitus; and the corroding ulcers of the prepuce and glans, the diſcharge of thin ſanious matter from the urethra, the mortification and the cancer of the penis, &c.—all mentioned by Celſus, lib. vi. cap. 18. De obſcœnarum partium vitiis; and deſcribed as obſtinate diſeaſes, and were modifications of our modern ſyphilitic complaints. But it is ſtrange to conceive,

ceive, that every ulcer and running from thoſe parts ſhould be venereal—ſurely they are compoſed of the ſame materials, and liable to the ſame injuries, as every other part in the body; conſequently ſubject to the ſame diſeaſes independent of this cauſe. Theſe paſſages, however, have been ſo variouſly interpreted, that it is impoſſible to draw any juſt or ſatisfactory concluſions relative to the true ſtate of theſe diſeaſes: but it is very apparent, from the majority of opinions, they do not bear greater marks of Venereal Diſtempers, than of many others, though they have been often produced as an argument in favor of its antiquity. Another remarkable circumſtance may be brought forward, which helps further to expunge the idea, that it was known to the ancients—it having no particular name affixed to it * when it made its firſt entrance into Europe, but was looked upon as an anonymous diſtem-

* The natives of the Caribbee Iſlands called the diſeaſe Epian, which is of the ſame ſignification as diſeaſed, diſtempered, or rotten.

per;

per; each nation beſtowing upon it, the name of the country they imagined they firſt received it from—we termed it the the French-pox, becauſe it was conjectured (how deſervedly it is impoſſible to determine) that its firſt communication to this iſland was through them *. The variety of deſignations for the ſame diſtemper, puzzled and perplexed practitioners, that they were abſolutely at a loſs what name they ſhould aſſign to it; it had not, however, received the appellation of French-pox till ſome time after the Neapolitan expedition. Some again have contended for its being known to Hippocrates, and attempt to produce paſſages from that divine old man, in order to prove their aſſertions. The diſeaſe which this prince of medicine ſpeaks of, and which is deſcribed by him (in Lib. Epidem. ſect. 3.) has in-

* However its moſt general name in Europe, on its firſt introduction, was the Neapolitan Diſeaſe, occaſioned, no doubt, from its being more generally known and communicated to the inhabitants of different nations, collected together at the ſiege of that city.

deed

deed ſome reſemblance to the ſymptoms of the Lues Venerea; but the diſtemper he there makes mention of, was acute and epidemical, attended with a conſiderable degree of fever, occaſioned from a hot and wet ſeaſon, not uncommon in ſome parts of Greece; but the Venereal Diſorder is chronical, peculiar to no ſeaſons, comes on without febrile ſymptoms, and contracted only by coition. The plague of Athens, which raged, according to Thucydides, at a ſhort period before the ſecond Peloponneſian war, in its appearance, bears much the ſame deſcription with the Lues Venerea; but that diſeaſe, which this celebrated Athenian hiſtorian takes notice of, diſappeared of itſelf; what never or very rarely occurs in venereal affections, or was cured by quite different remedies, than what is commonly employed in theſe diſtempers. A moment's conſideration muſt convince us, that this circumſtance alone is ſufficient to demoliſh this opinion: but when men are anxious, that the world ſhould adopt their favorite doctrines, how-

ever abſurd and inconſiſtent, they have often ingenuity enough to provide themſelves with a ſufficient code of arguments to ſupport their ſide of the queſtion. The following fabulous account, taken from Herodotus, a celebrated hiſtorian, who flouriſhed in the eighty-ſeventh Olympiad, has made ſome imagine, that the Scythians were acquainted with the Venereal Diſeaſe, and by them diſſeminated through half the globe, ſome hundred years before the expedition to America in 1492; which, from its peculiarity and eccentricity, we cannot omit inſerting it in this Inquiry.—The Scythians, an enterpriſing, ſpirited people, remarkable for their proweſs in military affairs, made an irruption into Paleſtine, where they plundered and deſtroyed the temple at Aſcalon, erected in honor of Venus Urania. The commiſſion of this ſacrilegious action, incenſed the Goddeſs ſo much, that ſhe inflicted on the deſpoilers of her temple, and their poſterity, a diſtemper which they termed ϑηλειαν νȣσον: and that ſuch as laboured under this complaint were called by

by the Scythians εναριας or execrable *.— The above quotation from this Greek author, has been produced as favouring the antiquity of the Venereal Diſeaſe; and as a further proof of this, it has been alledged by many, but particularly John de Laet, (who wrote a large folio De Origine Gentium Americanarum) that the ſame cuſtoms were obſerved to prevail among the native Americans, when diſcovered, as were practiſed by the Scythians; "which makes it a matter of doubt, (ſays this writer) but that "theſe people had communication with "America and its iſlands, long previous to "its diſcovery by Columbus." But theſe are matters of fiction, the offspring of ſpeculative and luxuriant imagination, and by no means deſerve our attention.

Innumerable are the texts of ſcripture brought forward in order to aſcertain its antiquity. The ſacred, as well as profane writings, have been ranſacked and miſconſtrued in favor of theſe hypothetical doctrines. The boils of Job, and the pains in

* Aſtruc, ch. i. b. 1.

David's bones, have been ſuppoſed venereal, but without the leaſt foundation; although ſome inimical to revelation, have endeavoured to leave a blot on the memory of theſe good and illuſtrious men. The learned Joſephus, the celebrated Jewiſh hiſtorian, makes no mention of this diſeaſe: if ſuch a one had been common in his time, it would not readily have eſcaped the penetrating genius of that much admired author. Many of the moderns imagine Job's complaints to have been the ſmall-pox; but this is merely imaginary, as his diſtemper was of too long duration for that malady. Several divines have viewed it more in a figurative or allegorical ſenſe, than as a corporeal affliction; this laſt opinon ſeems to be moſt conſiſtent with revealed religion, conſequently our attempts, either to inveſtigate or determine of what nature the complaints were, which it pleaſed the Divine Being to inflict him with, muſt appear at the ſame time preſumptuous, and highly abſurd to every rational

tional obſerver. Dr. Mead* ſuppoſed that it was cuticular, "for it is certain (ſays "he) that the bodies of the Hebrews "were very liable to foul ulcers of the "ſkin from time immemorial; upon "which account, many learned men are "of opinion, that they were forbid the "uſe of ſwine's fleſh, which, as it affords "groſs nouriſhment, and not eaſily car- "ried off by the ſkin, is very improper "food for ſuch conſtitutions: wherefore "the hotter the countries were in which "they inhabited, ſuch as the Deſerts of "Arabia, the more ſeverely the diſeaſe "raged. And authors of other nations, "who deſpiſed the Jews, ſay, that it was "upon this account they were driven out "of Egypt, leſt the leproſy, a diſeaſe very "common amongſt them, ſhould ſpread "over the country: and perhaps it was "a ſpecies of this diſtemper which had "affected the body of this virtuous man." —From the ſymptoms which he com- plains of, as deſcribed in the quotations

* Mead's Medica ſacra.

referred to below *, and confidering that the Jews were much fubjected to the leprofy, it feems more likely to have been this diftemper, than the fmall-pox, if we are determined, at all events, to give him a *bodily difeafe*.

The idea of this emblem of patience's difeafe being a fpecies of our modern venereal complaints, was very much credited by many countries profeffing the Roman Catholic perfuafion. They were of opinion, that the venereal diftemper deduced its origin from Job, and for this reafon, we are informed, that a miffal was printed at Venice, in 1542, wherein it was enacted, that mafs fhould be faid in honor of Job, by thofe recovered of this difeafe, as being fuppofed to owe their deliverance to his interceffion, and one who had fuffered the fame calamity.

It is furprifing, that the people of thofe times fhould have carried their credulity fo far; nor is it eafy to conceive, how that ill-founded and fuperftitious opinion

* Job ii. 7. and chap. vii. 5.

could

could prevail, at leaſt, amongſt men of underſtanding; as there is no ſuch affinity between the diſeaſe of Job, as deſcribed by Mead, and the texts of ſcripture alluded to, and the venereal diſeaſe, ſufficient to eſtabliſh ſo outree a doctrine; for all the ſymptoms of Job's complaints, which are there mentioned, are only general, and common to every diſeaſe of the ulcerous kind.

With reſpect to the diſeaſe of David, as he himſelf has repreſented to us in Pſalm xxxviii. 3 and 7, it appears to be more a diſeaſe of the mind than body; which is very demonſtrable when he ſays, "there is no ſoundneſs of his fleſh, be-"cauſe of the anger of God:" and it ought therefore not to be taken in a literal ſenſe, as relating to complaints of an infirm ſickly body, but the torture of a grieved and penitent mind. But granting, that when David wrote the verſes quoted, he really was afflicted with a corporeal diſeaſe, and that the complaints he there mentions, related wholly to it, it

does not thence follow, that it was venereal.; for it is believed, agreeable to the ſacred hiſtory, that David was a man much addicted to the gratification of the moſt criminal paſſions; and one of his moſt predominant, and moſt excuſable, ſeems to have been the love of women; and no doubt an exceſſive uſe of them, will occaſion dreadful complaints to attack the generative powers independent of any venereal taint, as to create pains in the bones, and other ſymptoms, which the Jewiſh Monarch complains of; and debilitate the procreative faculties in ſuch a manner, as to be rendered ſo totally incapable of retaining the ſecreted ſemen, that there muſt enſue a conſtant dripping upon the leaſt incitement of that fluid through the urethra—the relaxant and painful conſequences of this needs no comment, as it muſt be obvious to every one the leaſt converſant in the animal œconomy. —We have to lament, that affections of this kind, and brought on by the ſame

caufe, do too frequently occur in thefe more effeminate days *. If this conftruction is admitted, the arguments of our opponents are confuted, and muft fall to the ground: though fome have taken a great deal of pains, and laboured very affiduoufly, to throw a ftigma on thefe two venerable characters; but the falfity of their affertions is evidently demonftrated: as the fymptoms which Job, and the royal Pfalmift complain of, do not correfpond fufficiently with the Lues Venerea, as to fupport fo unaccountable an idea.

With as little reafon can the iffue of the flefh, and the habitual emiffion of feed, fo often mentioned in the vth and xvth chapters of Leviticus, be applied to this difeafe: for if we confider only the days of feparation which are enjoined, we may plainly fee what is there meant, could not poffibly be this diftemper. And befides, we know that even a fimple go-

* Dr. Tiffot on Onanifm.

norrhea, and the menſtrua *, were looked upon in all eaſtern countries as having ſome impurity, and even contagion about them; therefore the Moſaic legiſlator lays them under the ſame reſtriction with the lepers.

Mr. William Becket, our ingenious countryman, was one of the laſt perſons of any conſequence, who denied the Venereal Diſeaſe being of a modern date, and attempted to defend its antiquity, in the London Philoſophical Tranſactions of 1718. He produced *thoſe* three papers, and took an infinite deal of pains to col-

* The law under the Moſaic diſpenſation, forbad thoſe who had commerce with women, during the period of their menſtruation, to appear in public, or to enter the tabernacle of the congregation, until they brought voluntary offering for their ablution and purification. Until this was performed they were accounted legally unclean, and ſeverely, though not capitally, amenable if convicted of a neglect herein.

The divine Legiſlator, no doubt, enacted this moral rite, to avoid the many diſeaſes which ſuch impure proceedings were pregnant with, particularly in thoſe hot countries through which the children of Iſrael paſſed.

lect

lect every argument which ingenuity could invent, or could be adduced in favor of his opinion; eſpecially from the accounts handed down, concerning a diſeaſe called the Arſura, or *perilous infirmitie* of Brenning, defined by John Ardern, an eminent Engliſh ſurgeon, to be a certain inward heat and excoriation of the urethra. The cauſes of theſe ſymptoms may eaſily be accounted for, and is nearly coeval with the incontinencies of mankind; for men otherwiſe in perfect health, who are unguarded in their amours, and promiſcuouſly have connection with every woman they meet, (comparatively ſpeaking) and in all probability with ſome, who may be labouring under the fluor albus*, or many other

* It would be highly commendable, in every practitioner, when conſulted in any diſcharge from thoſe parts, to be particularly tender in not too raſhly giving his opinion relative to their nature, where married people are concerned, without deliberately weighing every circumſtance. An unattention to this, united to ignorance or neglect in diſtinguiſhing venereal gonorrhœas, from thoſe ariſing from other ſtimuli

other diſcharges of an acrid nature, muſt lay their accounts to expect frequently con-

ſtimuli, have too frequently been, to my certain knowledge, the irremediable cauſe of deſtroying the peace and harmony of many a worthy and virtuous pair. We have here attempted to point out the criteria, by which we are enabled to diſtinguiſh the difference between the two diſeaſes.—Firſt, The ſuddenneſs of the appearance of the diſcharge, occaſioned by other ſtimuli than venereal, being moſt commonly in twenty-four hours, and ſeldom longer than forty-eight, after coition. Secondly, By the ſhortneſs of its duration, ſeldom continuing longer than a period of ſeven or eight days, and often diſappearing entirely in two or three, without the application of any remedy whatever.—The following intereſting medical fact tends to illuſtrate and eſtabliſh the above rules.

A gentleman of my particular acquaintance, having connection with a lady (whom he lived with for ſome time in habits of intimacy) at a time ſhe was afflicted with the fluor albus, to a very violent degree; the conſequence was, in twenty-four hours after being with her, he was ſeized with an excoriation all over the glans penis, and an oozing out of matter, attended with a puriform diſcharge from the urethra, and other ſymptoms of virulent gonorrhœa. —Theſe appearances aſtoniſhed him greatly; for being confident of his own conſtancy, and no leſs ſo of the honor

contracting in thoſe parts a whole train of appearances, ſuch as heats, ſcalding in making water, inflammations, &c,—therefore the Arſura which Becket ſpeaks of is not venereal, but merely the conſequence of inflammation, which will produce all the above aſſemblage of ſymptoms, from the application of any ſtimulus (ſufficiently

honor and integrity of his female friend, did not therefore apply to any ſurgeon, but waited the event, only bathing the parts frequently with warm milk and water, with no other intention than to keep them clean. Which treatment, together with religiouſly avoiding any intercourſe with one another, he was relieved in the ſpace of a few days, from a ſtate of great ſuſpence and uneaſineſs.—From this narrative two queſtions may naturally be ſtarted—Would this gentleman, on being connected with a woman in health, in this ſituation, be the inſtrument of infecting her with a diſeaſe ſimilar to that with which he was affected? If ſo—may not the Venereal Diſeaſe have ſprung à priori from ſome ſuch analogous affection?

Were we to admit of this propoſition, (which we by no means conſent to) the Venereal Diſeaſe muſt have exiſted in the earlieſt periods in every quarter of the world, and capable continually of producing itſelf.

powerful) to the mucus membrane of the urethra.

The learned Dr. Friend was of this opinion, and in confirmation of it obferves, " That fuch appearances may oc-" cur from converfing with women who, " without having the Venereal Difeafe, are " afflicted with ulcers and impofthumations " on thofe parts. This may eafily ac-" count for the putrifaction of the ge-" nitals, which the celebrated John of " Gaunt died of, and the Brenning fo " often mentioned in our Englifh hiftory. " But what our old phyficians and John " Ardern have fuggefted upon the laft " head, is all taken from the Arabians; " who, in any excoriation, or ulcer on " the penis or vagina, mention the heat " of urine, which the tranflators of them " often call Ardor, Arfura, and Incendi-" um, and accordingly prefcribe a great " variety of injections for thefe com-" plaints *."

* Hiftor. Phyfic. vol. ii. p. 355, octavo edition.

By

By Dr. Friend's account we may underſtand, that this Arſura was not a diſeaſe peculiar to this country, as has been repeatedly aſſerted, but common alſo to the Arabians. It is not neceſſary here to collect all Mr. Becket's authorities in favor of his theory, nor indeed will the limits of this publication admit of it, we ſhall therefore content ourſelves with laying before you a few of the moſt diſtinguiſhed.

One of his teſtimonies is taken from the manuſcript rules and ordinaries of the ſtews, that were by public authority allowed to be kept in the Borough of Southwark, and are ſuppoſed to have been drawn up about the year 1430—one of which is expreſſed in the following manner. "Of thoſe who keep women, having a "wicked infirmitie, and orders under a ſe-"vere penalty, that no ſtew-holder keep noo "woman wythin his houſe that hath any "ſyckneſſe of Brenning."—Another of his later authorities is produced from an old publication, titled the ſupplication of beggars, and

and presented by one Simon Fish (a zealous promoter of the Reformation) to Henry the VIIIth, in which, speaking of the dissolute and debauched life which the priests at that time led, he observes, "These "be they who corrupt the whole gene- "ration of mankind in your realm, that "catch the pockes of one woman and "bear to another *." Though the authorities which Mr. Becket brings forward in favor of this doctrine, are both curious and well attested, yet, when we consider the disease he alludes to in the first article, (the Brenning) may be generated in any country, and at any period. With regard to the authenticity of the last authority, no one, I imagine, doubts, or presumes to deny, even the non-assertors of the antiquity of the Lues Venerea; and am therefore much surprised at Mr. Becket's producing this in favor of it, as, according to my idea, it greatly injures his hypothesis; for, consonant to the accounts of several writers of eminence,

* Astruc, vol. i. p. 52.

venereal

venereal complaints were perfectly characterized, and well known in the time of Henry the VIIIth *, and first made their appearance at Bristol † in 1498, eleven years before this monarch began his reign. To those who with impartial and unbiassed judgment reflect on the above historical facts, the misapplication and futility of Mr. Becket's testimonies will appear evident, and unable to confute the best grounded opinion, that the disease is of modern date, and perfectly unknown in Europe, before it was introduced by Columbus's Fleet in 1493 ‡.

The

* The following observation from Hume, the prince of modern historians, vol. iv. Hist. of Henry the VIIIth, as a further confirmation of this report —"Among the charges against Cardinal Woolsey, "it is remarkable, that his whispering in the king's "ear, knowing himself to be affected with venereal "distempers, is an article against him." See p. 162, quart. edit.

† Vid. Lock's Miscellanies.

‡ A very strong additional proof, that the Lues Venerea did not appear in Europe before this period, is the silence of Buchanan, who in his satire on the

Franciscans,

The moſt eminent amongſt the moderns, who have treated of the Venereal

Franciſcans, wrote at Guipuiſcoa in Spain, which is univerſally allowed to be the juſteſt delineation of the clerical vices of that age, whilſt every ſpecies of impurity, irregular, carnal indulgencies, diſſolute effeminacy, and every kind of intercourſe *nudi cum nudis*, is pourtrayed in the moſt glowing colours.—But their direful effects, the Lues Venerea, the dreadful ſcourge of unlawful pleaſures, is not mentioned. Though this poem was wrote ann. 1538, we find that the Venereal Diſeaſe was not even at ſo late a date generally known throughout every remote part of Europe.

Vid. Buchani vita à ſe ipſo ſcripta.

Another deciſive evidence of the above is—that the Venereal Diſeaſe was unknown in Ruſſia before the reign of Peter the Great; and the reaſon aſſigned for its appearing then, in that unlimited empire, is this; that till that period, the traffic carried on by the Ruſſians, did not require much communication or dealings with foreigners. But after that enterpriſing and indefatigable Emperor had taken the reſolution to viſit other parts of Europe, and at the ſame time had ſent many ſubjects abroad to learn trades and manufactories; theſe carried back with them, to their native ſoil, though improved and poliſhed in their manners, the ſeeds of this dire, this faſhionable contagion.

Vid. Mead's Works, Vol. II. and Voltaire's Hiſt. of the Czar of Moſcovy.

Diſeaſe, are the Doctors Boerhaave and Sydenham; the latter of theſe luminaries of medicine, ſuppoſed that the Venereal Diſeaſe was not an original one in Hiſpaniola, or any of the other Weſt-India iſlands, but that it was imported thither by the negroes, whom the Spaniards carried from the Coaſt of Guinea, to their American ſettlements, and that amongſt them it was a common diſtemper. But this diſeaſe, which the Doctor mentions as carried over by the ſavage Africans to the Weſt-Indies, is more likely to have been the Yaws, a diſtemper very general amongſt them, and ſeems to be indigenous to Africa and Arabia *. But from the authority of that

* There is a ſpecies of this African Endemic very prevalent in the Weſtern parts of Scotland, diſtinguiſhed by the inhabitants under the name of *Sibbins*. A practitioner of the Shire of Galloway informed me, that it is often communicated by the kiſs, without any other freedom paſſing between the ſexes, but more frequently indeed by coition; and that the ſame mode of cure which is obſerved to be of ſervice in the former diſeaſe, is purſued with great ſucceſs in this. Dr. Gilchriſt, in ſpeaking of it, relates, that the ſpreading

that very correct and judicious historian, Dr. Robertson *, we are led to believe,

of it is chiefly owing to the neglect of cleanliness; and seems to think, that by a due attention to that virtue it might be extirpated.—If cleanliness is required as an assistant to the cure of any disease, it must be eminently so in the Lues Venerea. Advocates for this virtue go even so far as to imagine, that a proper attention to it will cure a recent infection, independant of any other application. However just this assertion may be, I shall not dispute; but it is a fact well authenticated, that in many Oriental Countries, and in particular Persia, where ablution is considered as a religious ceremony, this distemper is not attended with those baneful and pernicious consequences as it is in Europe.—Indeed the mildness of the Venereal Disease among the Persians, may be partly owing to the salubrity of the climate, as well as to their frequent use of the warm bath when afflicted with that malady.

* "The impossibility of carrying on any improvement in America, unless the Spanish planters could command the labour of the natives, was an insuperable objection to *Las Casas* of treating them as free subjects. In order to provide some remedy for this, without which he found it was in vain to mention his scheme, he proposed to purchase a sufficient number of negroes from the Portuguese settlements on the Coast of Africa, and to transport them to America, in order that they might be employed as slaves in working the mines, and cultivating the

" ground.

that the ſagacious Sydenham has been greatly miſtaken in this matter. For the Venereal Diſeaſe, as we have endeavoured to prove, was contracted by the Spaniards in 1492; and, agreeable to Dr. Roberſon's accounts, no ſlaves were tranſported from Africa to their Weſt-India poſſeſſions before 1503. But how the Britiſh Hippocrates could argue in favour of ſo inconſiſtent a doctrine, muſt appear to every one aſtoniſhing, as it is directly contrary to hiſtorical facts. Unleſs it can be proved, that the natives of Africa had communication with the Americans before its diſcovery by Columbus, which we have

" ground. One of the firſt advantages which the " Portugueſe had derived from their diſcoveries in " Africa, aroſe from the trade in ſlaves. Various " circumſtances concurred in reviving this odious " commerce, which had been long aboliſhed in Europe, and which is no leſs repugnant to the feelings " of humanity, than to the principles of religion. " As early as the year 1503, a few negroe ſlaves had " been ſent into the New World. In the year 1511, " Ferdinand permitted the importation of them in " great numbers."

Hiſt. Americ. book iii. vol. i. p. 225.

great reafon to believe they had not, at leaft we are acquainted with no writer that ever has advanced the contrary.

The Englifh tranflator of Boerhaave's Aphorifms, in fpeaking of the Lues Venerea, obferves *, " It may be true what " Sydenham afferts, that the name of the " difeafe was not known in Europe before " it was brought from Guinea; but it is " amazing, that either he or Boerhaave, " or any unprejudiced lover of truth, and " men of candid reafoning in all other " matters, fhould fo far be blinded as to " believe this difeafe of a modern date, " and not to know its true features, in a " great many paffages of the ancients, " both facred and profane: and I am much " furprized, that nobody has taken any " notice of the following plain paffage out " of Plutarch, in Otho's life, in my opi- " nion paft all cavalling; which, had our " author or Sydenham obferved, it is im- " poffible but men of their candour and " equity would have altered theirs."—

* Vid. Boerhaave's Aphorifms, paragraph 1446, on the Venereal Difeafe.

" Nothing

" * Nothing gained or gratified the people
" more, than Otho's juſtice in relation to
" Tigillinus, who was a perſon not only
" actually puniſhed by the very apprehen-
" ſion of puniſhment, which the whole
" city required as a juſt debt, but
" with ſeveral diſeaſes too, that he con-
" tracted by converſing with lewd wo-
" men; and though the ill conſequences
" to which this courſe of life expoſed him,
" were generally looked upon as puniſh-
" ment enough, yet the people thought
" life itſelf too great for him to enjoy,
" who had been the cauſe of ſo many
" men's deſtruction." But this paſſage does not certify the antiquity of the Venereal Diſeaſe, more than others we have had occaſion to quote. The tranſlator ſeems to be as far from convincing us of the antiquity of the Venereal Diſeaſe, as Sydenham was in aſſerting, that it was firſt communicated to the Spaniards by the inhabitants of Guinea. The diſtemper of Tigillinus, which Plutarch

* Vid. Putarch on Otho's Life.

ſpeaks of as produced from unreſtrained connections with diſſolute women, is not to be wondered at; for when we conſider the debauched courſe of life this Roman purſued, whom according to Tacitus, was addicted to the moſt vile and brutal gratifications, from ſuch an abandoned exiſtence, a train of diſeaſes conſequently muſt have been the iſſue, equal, if not ſuperior in virulence to the Lues Venerea, but exempted from its infectious tendency; in ſhort, ſuch a complaint as I have taken notice of in a former part of theſe obſervations *.

Rhazes (in his Continent) ſpeaks of a diſeaſe of the penis, as a very common occurrence in Perſia, and particularly at Bagdad, where he practiſed in great eminence.—Viz. Ulcers on the penis, brought on by a particular mode of coition—Aſcenſio ſupra mulieris virum. Advocates for the antiquity of the Venereal Diſeaſe, have fondly imagined that it hints at this diſtemper. But no one, I conceive, would be ſo abſurd, as to ſupport this notion, or argue that Rhazes thought it what

* Vid. p. 25.

we

we now term Venereal; or that ſuch an attitude was capable of producing this virus. The abſurdity and inconſiſtency of reaſoning after this manner, muſt appear obvious; as to imagine that every ulcer in this part was Venereal, and could proceed from no other cauſe, or that even a gonorrhœa was always the inſeparable attendant of impure coition.

As we have now briefly conſidered thoſe opinions of the ancients, which are moſt worthy of our obſervation, relative to the antiquity, &c. of the Venereal Diſeaſe, we ſhall next follow it to a clime, where it has been, of late, unfortunately diſſeminated, and which has opened a new field for freſh ſources of diſpute, both to the learned and curious.

Amongſt the firſt of theſe, ſtand deſervedly eminenly, that ingenious naturaliſt, Dr. Forſter—to whom the world is ſo much indebted for his great diſcoveries on that pleaſing and inſtructive branch of ſcience, and for his late obſervations on the æra of

the Origin and Antiquity of the Lues Venera in the South Sea Iſlands, and on the period of its appearance in Europe. In favour of his theory, he reproduces Mr. William Becket's arguments, (which we have canvaſſed pretty fully in a former part of this treatiſe) by which he attempts to convince us, that the Venereal Diſeaſe is of more ancient date than many preceding writers have alledged, by tracing its origin in thoſe Iſlands, and in Europe, to the remoteſt times; deducing it from natural cauſes, which have ſubſiſted from a very early period in hiſtory. He begins with obſerving, that when Captain Cook left Otaheite, in the year 1769, many of his crew were infected with the Venereal Diſeaſe; they at that time ſuſpected that the crew of Monſ. de Bougainville, the celebrated French circumnavigator, had communicated this diſeaſe to the inhabitants of the Society Iſlands.—From this nation being oftener cenſured with propagating this diſeaſe, than any other in Europe, we are led to the following excla-

mation

mation—O! thrice unhappy country, for having ſo frequently been the ſuppoſed medium of communicating this horrid diſtemper to the ſons of men; but more eſpecially in the preſent caſe, by ſo recently entailing it upon the innocent natives of the South Seas. For all the advantages they have, or ever may receive; all the attempts to enrich them with new ſpecies of vegetables and animals, cannot in any degree compenſate for the introduction of this evil, this ſcourge of mankind.—" But Monſ. " Bougainville, in return, ſuſpects, the " Engliſh, in the Dolphin, to have firſt " introduced it; and the Gentlemen of the " Dolphin aſſert, they never had one " man infected with Venereal complaints " whilſt they were at Otaheite, or imme- " diately afterwards *.

The following declaration of a friend of mine (whoſe veracity might be relied on) tends in a great meaſure to expiate our countrymen from ſo heavy a charge.—

* Obſervations made, during a voyage round the world, by John Reynolds Forſter, LL.D. p. 488.

That

That at that period, the diſeaſe was very prevalent in Otaheite, and that few of the ſhips company, that had commerce with the women of that Iſland, eſcaped it; and that the natives repeatedly affirmed, they had received the infection from Bougainville's crew, who viſited them at the interval between Capt. Cooke's firſt and ſecond voyage. But ſtill it remains to me a matter of doubt, whether the firſt infection ſprung from the French or Engliſh; for theſe Iſlands were viſited by both nations nearly about the ſame period; and each country ſeems willing to throw the odium, of introducing it upon the other.—Amongſt the many and ingeninous arguments which Dr. Foſter produces in favor of his hypotheſis, the following demands our moſt particular attention and ſtricteſt examination.—" There is great reaſon to believe, " that the Venereal Diſeaſe has not lately " been introduced into theſe Iſlands, but was " known there for a long time; eſpecially " as a young man, a native of Bolobola, " who went with us to Oraceidea, ac-

"quainted us that this evil was very com-
"mon there, where, however, no Euro-
"pean ſhip had ever viſited at that time;
"nay, he informed us that his mother fell
"a victim to the diſeaſe, before the arrival
"of any Europeans in thoſe Iſles, &c *."
This narration ſerves greatly to ſupport his argument; and if it poſſibly could be relied on, muſt go a great way to make us proſelytes to his opinion: though I ſhould ſtart at the idea, even in harbouring a doubt of the Doctor's veracity.—But when we conſider that his information was received from a native, who muſt have been a perſon, as it is natural to imagine, totally unqualified to form any ſatisfactory opinion concerning the appearances of a diſeaſe, or poſſeſſed ſuch a ſtock of medical diſcernment, as to render him capable of inveſtigating or diſtinguiſhing the leproſy, or ſeveral other analogous complaints indigenous to thoſe Iſlands, from Venereal diſtempers, as the differences of theſe diſeaſes has afforded matter of great diſpute, and puzzled many, the moſt emi-

* Forſter's Obſervations, &c.

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nent amongſt us.—It will not then create any aſtoniſhment in us, if an uncultivated inhabitant of the ſouthern hemiſphere, ſhould miſtake the one diſeaſe for the other; therefore to admit of this doctrine, we muſt be poſſeſſed of a great ſhare of credulity.—In order to leave a ſcope for the mind to employ itſelf, we ſhall propoſe the two following queſtions for its diſcuſſion.—May not this diſeaſe, which the young Bolobolean's mother died of, been a ſpecies of leproſy * or ſome herpetic complaint, ſo common

* This diſeaſe, or one which bears a ſtrong reſemblance of it, is very predominant among the natives of the Pacific Ocean; and is particularly deſcribed to be ſo (by Capt. Cook) at Hamoo, Vavaoo, and Feejee, three of the Friendly Iſlands.—Symptoms—It appears in every part of the body, in large broad ulcers, diſcharging a thin clear pus, ſome of which had a very virulent appearance in the face, and is generally attended with the loſs of the noſe, or a conſiderable part of it.—It cannot be in conſequence of Venereal contagion, although there is a great analogy between the ſymptoms; for it is not the reſult of Venereal intercourſes, but ariſes ſpontaneouſly, and ſeems to be indigenous to the climate.—Appearances, ſimilar to the above, owe their origin to drinking infuſions of the *ava*, (a very hot root,) which

common in tropical countries? Or allowing it, for a moment, to have been Venereal—may it not have been a diftemper indigenous in thefe Iflands, as well as it was reported to have been in Hifpaniola, and the other Weft-India Iflands? and not originated from libidinous exceffes, and promifcuous unreftrained intercourfes with one another, as he afferts.—I certainly

which conftitute the common beverage of thefe Iflands. —" The deftructive effects of this vegetable, obferves " Capt. Cook, was fo very vifible, to many of us who " had vifited thefe Iflands before, that we were fur- " prifed to find feveral of the natives, who were re- " markable for their fize and corpulency when we faw " them laft, now almoft reduced to fkeletons; and the " caufe of this alteration was univerfally attributed to " the ufe of the *ava*. Their fkins were dry, rough, " and covered with fcales, which, they fay, occafionally " fall off, and their fkins become, in fome degree, re- " newed. As an excufe for this baneful practice, they " alledge, it is to prevent their growing too corpulent; " but it enervates them exceedingly, and probably " fhortens the duration of their lives."—Were we to allow ourfelves a moment's thought on the hiftory of this affemblage of difeafes, we cannot but eafily difcover the fallacy of Dr. Forfter's conclufions.—Vid. Cook's laft Voyage abridged, Vol. II. p. 97.

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muſt acquieſce with him, that there is a probability of the Venereal Diſeaſe's exiſting ages in theſe Iſlands, previous to their diſcovery by Europeans—but the Doctor muſt excuſe me, if I differ from him in his theory, relative to the cauſes, which he ſays will produce the Diſeaſe.—Having advanced thus far, he ventures ſtill farther and endeavours to ſhew, that the diſorder in queſtion was not introduced into Europe by Columbus; and did not even then, as it is generally ſuppoſed, make its firſt appearance about the period of that important event, but was long before diſtinctly characteriſed, and familiarly known. To eſtabliſh this doctrine, he has recourſe to old opinions, and quotes the ingenious enquiries made by Monſ. Sanchez Ribero *, a phyſician

* Monſ. Sanchez Ribero, publiſhed a Diſſertation in the year 1765, in which he endeavours to prove that this Diſeaſe was not introduced from America, but took its riſe in Europe, and was brought on by an epidemical and malignant diſorder. Did I chuſe to enter into a diſquiſition on this ſubject, which I ſhould not have mentioned if it had not been intimately connected with this part of my enquiry, it would not be difficult to point

ſician in Ruſſia, who ſays, that the Venereal Diſeaſe appeared in Italy, and at Auvergne in France, at the very time when Columbus returned to Spain, from his Diſcoveries in America. .But theſe reports are very little to be attended to, for very evident and obvious reaſons; they cannot be ſufficiently aſcertained.—If the learned ſupporter of this opinion could inform us, whether there were any Italians and French, natives of Auvergne in the Columbian expedition? If there were, the Venereal Diſtemper appearing as ſoon in *Auvergne*, and in *Italy* as it did in Spain, even allowing that this really was ſo, may ſoon be accounted for. As it is but natural to imagine, that

point out ſome miſtakes with reſpect to the facts, upon which he founds, as well as ſome errors in the conſequences which he draws from them. The rapid communication of the Diſeaſe from Spain over Europe, ſeems to reſemble the progreſs of an epidemic, rather than that of a diſeaſe tranſmitted by infection. The firſt mention of it is in the year 1493, and before the year 1497, it had made its appearance in moſt countries of Europe, with ſuch alarming ſymptoms, as rendered it neceſſary for the civil magiſtrate to interpoſe in order to check its violence.—

Robertſon's America, Note 48. p. 464. Vol. I.

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the ſailors of theſe two kingdoms would be anxious to return to their reſpective habitations as ſoon as leave could be granted them, after ſo long and ſo remarkable a voyage, and carrying the diſtemper with them, would infect thoſe females whom they unfortunately connected with; and the diſtance being ſo ſhort between Spain and thoſe countries, and the difference of time would be ſo ſmall, that it would require the moſt accurate and eagle-eyed obſerver to decide, whether the ſeeds of the diſeaſe were not as ſoon ſown in France and Italy, as they were in Spain. —" It appears" (continues the Doctor in favor of his hypotheſis) " from a book " of Peter Pintor *, a learned Spaniſh " phyſician, that the Venereal Diſeaſe " raged at Rome, that it ſpread over all " Italy in the form of an epidemical diſ- " temper in the year 1493. Pacificus " Maximus, a celebrated poet, whoſe " works were publiſhed at Florence in " 1489, deſcribes, in lib. 3. ad Priapum,

* Forſter's Obſervations, p. 492.

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" the Venereal Diſeaſe in ſuch a manner, " that no doubt can be aſcertained of its " being perfectly known at that period. " Nor are there teſtimonies wanting, that " in times ſtill more remote, ſymptoms of " the Venereal Diſeaſe were well known. " Alſonſus, the firſt King of Naples, died " in 1458, of a gonorrhœa, or as Triſtano " Caraciola de veritate fortunæ expreſſes it, " *morbo inſuper immundo pertinaci, in* " *voluntario ſcilicet inſenſibilique, ſpermatis* " *fluxu*. Ladiſlaus, another Neapolitan " Monarch, likewiſe died in 1414, of an " infection in his genitals, contracted from " a girl whom he kept. More inſtances " can be produced to convince us that the " diſeaſe had been known among the an- " cients, and are to be found in Platner's " Opuſcula, de Morbo Campano, p. 2*.

" All

* As my own ſentiments entirely coincide with thoſe of the ingenious Dr. Wall, concerning the diſeaſes of *Alſonſus* and *Ladiſlaus*, it would be but doing juſtice to that Gentleman, to give you an abſtract of them.—— " That Alfonſus, King of Naples, died of a venereal " gonnorrhoea in the year 1485, is an aſſertion with- " out any plauſible foundation of truth—A circumſtance

 " of

" All these suggestions (continues the Dr.) " encourage me to suppose that the Venereal

" of this nature, rendered notorious by the hig hrank of " the victim, must have been so well known, that " those authors, who have treated of this Venereal " symptom, could not have presumed to assert, that it " did not make its appearance till the more common " symptoms of the Lues had been well known for more " than twenty years; nay, till the virulence with which " they had made their first invasion, was considerably " mitigated and corrected. Carraciolo only says, that " Alfonsus was destroyed, morbo immundo, involun- " tario scilicet & insensibili spermatis fluxu. But this " proves no more than that his disorder was a seminal " weakness, and a species of the Tabes Dorsalis, or " Gonorrhoea Ονειρογονος*. The Venereal Gonorrhœa, is " neither spermatis fluxus, nor is it a discharge without " pain, *insensibilis*.—Even this account of the cause " and manner of this Prince's death is, after all, very " weakly founded. It must be owned, that no one who " plunges into libidinous luxury, is exempt from its " debilitating effects, which generally lay the founda- " tion of corporeal and mental imbecility, and very " often cut short the thread of life; whereas Alfonsus " lived to a considerable age, passed no small part of his " life in the active engagements of the camp and the " field; and in his declining years, governed his united " dominions of Arragon, Sicily, and Naples, with such

* Sauvages Nosolog. Cl. ix. Ord. 3. Gen. xxx. Sp. 3. et Cl. x. Ord. 1. G. 1. Sp. 1.

" pur-

" Venereal Disease was not uncommon in
" ancient times, as has been repeatedly
" urged;

" prudence and prosperity, as to have obtained from " historians the title of great. Nor do they in general " make any mention that he was subject to any natural " or acquired infirmity of body or mind *.

" That Ladislaus, King of Naples, died of a Venereal " disorder, is not less disputable than the former asser- " tion. In the account given of him in the Diction- " naire Historique Portatif, it is said, " Il mourut a " Naples le 16 Août 1414, à 38ans d'un poison, que " la fille d'un medicin lui avoit, donné a Perouse,"— " a mode of expression extremely inaccurate, and not " to be hazarded by a biagropher, if he really died of a " Venereal disorder. Had that been the case, the " writer would have been either more or less explicit " than he is. If he was willing to conceal the misfor- " tune or disgrace of the King, he was not required to " say so much; if that Prince really died of this dis- " order, and the author was desirous of perpetuating " the memory of that event, he would not have expres- " sed himself in terms so ambiguous.—But the history " of Ladislaus supports the author's hypothesis, with more " plausibility than that of Alfonsus; because historians " agree that the Ladislaus, delivered from enemies at " home, and an over-match for those abroad, gave " himself up to pleasure, and shortened his days by ex- " cess of debauchery. It is most probable, however, " that the prejudicial consequences of these excesses,

* *Swinburne*'s Travels through the two Sicilies, p. 22.

" urged; that it, however, broke out with
" new rage about the year 1493, and that
" fixing and attaching itſelf upon many
" other epidemical diſtempers, it became

" led him to have recourſe to medicine, and to entruſt
" himſelf to the care of every empiric, who was baſe
" enough to flatter him with the perfect reſtoration of
" his debilitated frame; and that to one or more of the
" pretended reſtoratives, thus adminiſtered by the hand
" of empiriciſm, he finally became a victim."

Vid. Dr. WALL's Obſervations, &c.

The judiciouſneſs of this ingenious Gentleman's remarks is very apparent; for it is certain, that a promiſcuous uſe of women, attended with other irregularities, as we have before had repeated occaſions to mention, will create ſymptoms ſimilar to thoſe, of theſe two Monarchs, allowing their diſeaſes to have been what they are alledged; and therefore I cannot avoid cordially joining with him in rejecting this falſe idea, which has long been prevalent—that the diſeaſe was anciently known in Europe. On the contrary, that it is a diſtemper of modern date, and not introduced here before the concluſion of the 15th century. Such notion as this will be beſt refuted by the hiſtory of this diſtemper, when we conſider that *Gonorrhœa virulenta* *, did not make its appearance till, at leaſt, 40 years after the Lues Venerea; nor even at this day does it always accompany that diſeaſe.

* Naples was beſieged in the year 1495, and this Venereal ſymptom was not obſerved till the year 1536.

" viru-

"virulent by cohabiting with women.
"We need not, therefore, wonder that the
"diſeaſe ſhould have made its appearance
"at Otaheite, and its neighbourhood, long
"before the arrival of any European at
"their iſle."

Several other obſervations, equally curious as intereſting, are brought forward to eſtabliſh his aſſertions. But why ſo new and ſo unparalleled an affection, after remaining ſo long dormant, ſhould renew its vigour, and appear at ſo memorable an æra as 1493; memorable, it may be ſtyled, with great propriety, from its being the year, that Columbus, the diſcoverer of a new and vaſt empire, arrived at Palos, a ſea-port in Spain, amidſt the unbounded acclamations of the gazing multitude, appear to me ſurpriſing and chimerical. Unleſs the learned broacher of this intricate doctrine can ſatisfactorily ſolve the above ſtated queſtions, his theory, though very ingenious, will never bring conviction to my mind; nor are they competent to ſtand the teſt of mature conſideration and reflection.

 There

There is another remark we ſhould mention, and which ſerves, in a great meaſure, to overthrow his arguments *in toto*—the name given to the diſeaſe by the inhabitants of thoſe iſles. The Otaheiteans called it *apano pretane*, or the Britiſh diſeaſe; and ſometimes *apano miriatano*, or a diſeaſe of the penis *. This name ſeems to have been given it, by thoſe Indians, in the period between Capt. Cook's firſt and ſecond expedition. It does not appear clear, though the natives call it the Britiſh Diſeaſe, that it was firſt communicated to them by Britons, for theſe innocent and happy Iſlanders called every European Britiſh, owing, no doubt, to the very high reſpect and veneration they held every thing, the produce of our glorious Iſland. If it had been a diſtemper of long ſtanding amongſt them, they would have had ſome appellation, ſome expreſſion of their own, to ſo baneful and deſtructive a malady, previous to their being diſcovered by Euro-

* *Apano*, ſignifying in the Otaheitean language, a *diſeaſe*, and *miriatano* the *privy parts*.

peans,

peans, which we are well informed, by the repeated teſtimonies of many, they had not *. Another ſtrong circumſtantial evidence to the contrary, is, the panic and deſpair it occaſioned throughout thoſe iſlands, where univerſal joy had been before ſpread; and their intire ignorance of it, before the French viſited them, united with their unacquaintance of any remedy to counteract its malignity; for if it had been of long continuance among them, nature, who is always provident, would have lent her friendly aid to have alleviated its direful conſequences.

† The ſufferings of the firſt infected, amongſt the Society Iſlands, are deſcribed by

* It appears plainly, from Hawkſworth's account, they had no name at all for it at the time of the firſt Voyage, and diſtinguiſhed it only by a metaphorical expreſſion of the ſame import as rottenneſs. Vol. II. p. 233.

† The diſeaſe, according to the lateſt accounts, is much more violent in the Sandwich, than in the Society or Friendly Iſlands: it is reported to be ſo deſtructive at ſome of the former, as to be the death of many, of both ſexes; in ſome of the Sandwich Iſlands only, it was attended

by the natives, in the moſt pathetic terms, to be inſupportably grievous, and its rage not to be endured: they ſeem to be analogical to the ſufferings of the firſt victims amongſt Europeans, which we have had occaſion to mention in a former part of this enquiry. It is very ſurpriſing that the Venereal Diſeaſe ſhould increaſe in its virulence for years, after its being tranſplanted into a new and foreign ſoil. *Ex gr.* On its firſt appearance in Europe, it is allowed that it was very violent, for a century and upwards; but after that period it gradually diminiſhed in the variety and violence of its ſymptoms. From this occurring, we have reaſon to believe, that it will obſerve the ſame revolution in the Iſlands of the Pacific Main, as it has hitherto done in

tended with thoſe dreadful conſequences; for at Owyhee, the largeſt of the whole group, (it obſerved a milder courſe) at which that perſevering and adventurous commander, Capt. Cook, whoſe memory will ever be revered and eſteemed, and whoſe loſs will ever be regretted by every lover of ſcience, fell a victim to ſavage reſentment. But the naval genius of Britain bids us drop a tear at the recital of this unfortunate event.

every

every quarter of the univerſe, where it has been unfortunately introduced. It is not certain, what remedies are employed by the natives to diſpel the fiend from thoſe hoſpitable and delightful iſlands, which deſerved a better return, as their benevolence is free from deceit, and their careſſes the tribute of love and ſimplicity. We have indeed been lately informed, that their cure principally depends on the internal uſe of ſome certain plants, (the moſt general, and, indeed, the only remedy of nations in an uncivilized ſtate) whoſe properties have not as yet been inveſtigated *.

It does not appear improbable, but that they poſſeſs a ſpecific power; for during

* With this remedy they uſe another of a very ſingular nature, and which ſeems unneceſſary in a hot country. Having heated ſome ſtones, they lay a thick cloth over them, covered with a quantity of a ſmall plant of the muſtard kind, and over them is ſpread another cloth, on this they ſeat themſelves, and ſweat profuſely. This method is likewiſe practiſed by them for the removal of other complaints, and particularly for the after-pains of child-bed women.

Cap-

Captain Cook's laſt ſtay at Otaheitee, none were to be ſeen in whom the diſeaſe had made any great progreſs, from the time it had been introduced among them, which was in 1768 or 1769. This was verified in one of the natives, who went from the Reſolution infected, and returned in a ſhort time to all appearance perfectly recovered; but whether radically ſo, their ſhortneſs of continuance at that Iſland prevented them from deciding. Repeated endeavours were made to aſcertain the medicated qualities aſcribed to theſe vegetables, but every attempt of this kind proved ineffectual; occaſioned, in a great degree, to their unacquaintance of the idioms of the language peculiar to thoſe iſlands. For it it is a well eſtabliſhed maxim, that the firſt ſteps to be taken towards the making any progreſs in diſcoveries in any country, is to procure a knowledge of their language *.

It

* Place a man, *e. gr.* in Lapland or Japan, poſſeſſed of every natural knowledge, a maſter of every human attainment; thus ſituated, and thus accompliſhed, what progreſs, what proficiency in their arts, manners, and cuſtoms,

It has been circulated, that mercury has been of late left in thoſe iſlands, by the ſurgeons of the reſpective ſhips that have viſited them; if ſo, it is much to be dreaded, but that all-potent mineral will not be judiciouſly adminiſtered; ſo that this remedy may be productive of as many evils amongſt them, as the diſeaſe: and it does not appear, from the various accounts of voyagers, that they have either phyſicians, or ſurgeons by profeſſion, except the prieſt, whoſe relief conſiſts in prayers and ceremonies, not in drugs and preſcriptions. Phyſic ſeems amongſt them cloſely to be interwoven with the prevailing ſyſtem of mythology; the ſacred functions of the prieſthood are combined with the practical duties of the phyſician.—Where intemperance produces no diſeaſes, there will be no phyſicians by profeſſion; yet where there is ſufferance, there will always be an attempt to relieve; and where the cauſe of

cuſtoms, can he expect to arrive at, without a previous knowledge of their language, the medium through which theſe are tranſacted?

the difeafe and the remedy are alike unknown, thefe will naturally be directed by fuperftition: thus it happens in thefe iflands, and in other countries, that groan under the united influences of ignorance, fuperftition, and oppreffion; and where that bright luminary, fcience, has never fhone with that brilliancy which fhe does in enlightened nations.

It has been afferted, that the inhabitants of the South-Sea Iflands, though afflicted with Lues, are yet free from gonorrhœa; and Dr. Duncan has produced this affertion in fupport of the following hypothefis, viz. "That the virus in gonorrhœa "and fyphilis are not the fame; that the "former never produces the latter, and "*vice verfa* *." The Doctor, in favor of

* The oppofite doctrine is, that the virus producing Lues Venerea, and that producing gonorrhœa, differ only in ftrength. From the weaker kind originates gonorrhœal fymptoms. From that more concentrated, the Lues Venerea. It appears to me more probable, that the difference of thefe diftempers arife from the manner in which the virus is applied, rather than from its different degrees of concentration—*e. gr.* The virulent

of his opinion, obſerves, that he was informed by a gentleman who accompanied Captain Cook to Otaheitee in 1774, that though the Venereal Diſeaſe, which had been lately introduced there, was very common among the inhabitants, yet that affection of it the gonorrhœa was ſtill unknown to them. In contradiction to this information, I have to add the report of a friend of mine, who was on board the Adventure, during her voyage on diſcoveries, in a medical capacity, and was at that iſland much about the period alluded

rulent mucus of the vagina being driven, or forced into the urethra in coition, attaches itſelf to the lacunæ, irritates and inflames them, and produces the gonorrhœal diſcharge.—But if the ſame poiſon, poſſeſſed of equal virulence, be applied to the glans, preputium, &c. an ulcer will be the conſequence, which, in this ſtate, we ſhall term a primary chancre, being only a local complaint: but if this chancre remain ſuch a time, that the virus from it is abſorbed into the general maſs of fluids, and other ſymptoms follow, ſuch as ulcers in the mouth, fauces, and throat, buboes, and other anomalous appearances, we would denominate theſe ſecondary, univerſal or ſyphilitic ſymptoms, or thoſe ariſing from a tainted maſs.

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to, viz.—That the majority of the Adventure's crew, who were afflicted with this diſeaſe while at Otaheitee, had ſymptoms of gonorrhœa only. A later and very reſpectable authority ſeems to verify this laſt aſſertion; for Dr. Swediaur informs us in his excellent practical Treatiſe * on Venereal Diſeaſes, that Captain King, who ſucceeded Capt. Clarke in the late voyage round the world, aſſured him, that he himſelf had ſeen many of them with matter dripping from their urethra. I muſt acknowledge, that his arguments have not brought conviction to my mind; nor do I imagine what is now thrown out, will by any means afford ſatisfactory evidence to thoſe who may have adopted his opinion. It would, however, be a digreſſion, and enlarging the bulk of theſe obſervations greater than what was firſt intended, were I to enter into a diſquiſition on this obſcure ſubject; neither am I competent for a taſk of ſuch uncommon difficulty, nor indeed are we provided with any experiments that can lead us in the leaſt to decide this queſtion; and if we

were,

were, I cannot ſee any benefit that would ariſe from it in practice. It is enough that we are acquainted with a remedy, when judiciouſly adminiſtered, ſufficiently powerful to deſtroy the effects of the virus, and cure the diſeaſe. I refer the curious to peruſe the arguments which this learned gentleman has brought forward in favor of this doctrine, *in his medical caſes and obſervations*.

I ſhall now finiſh my hiſtorical obſervations by remarking, that it has been my intention throughout, to deſtroy this falſe idea, that the Venereal Diſeaſe was known in the earlieſt periods of European hiſtory: on the contrary, I have attempted to eſtabliſh, that the diſeaſe is of modern date, and introduced at the æra repeatedly mentioned; and that thoſe diſtempers, which have been produced from authors of antiquity (as the *Arſura* of Ardern, &c.) in favor of it, were not Venereal, though ſimilar to it in their appearances, but occaſioned by theſe four cauſes—viz. 1ſt, luxurious living—2d, incontinency in the ſexes—3d, want of cleanlineſs

cleanlineſs—4th, exceſſive hot ſeaſons in cold climates, or a natural hot climate *. One or more of theſe cauſes combined,

* It is certain, that in hot countries the women have uſually a very ſharp, and, in a degree, a virulent diſcharge of the menſes. In Syria, and in many other Aſiatic countries, it has been remarked, that the menſtrua have ſomething contagious about them—And Tavernier (Voyag. des Indes) relates, that the women among the Caffres are of ſo virulent a diſpoſition, at the period of their menſtrual diſcharge, that if an European ſtand for any time near the urine they have lately made, will be often ſeized with head-ach, and ſometimes with fever. Even in our milder regions, it not uncommonly occurs, that when a perſon has (unknowingly) commerce with women during this periodical effuſion of blood, the glans and prepuce will be affected with ſuperficial puſtules, excoriations, and ſlight inflammations, which ſoon diſappear: the beſt remedy for theſe appearances, is waſhing them with warm milk and water, or a weak ſolution of Goulard's extract of lead.—Theſe ſymptoms have, I am fully convinced, too often been inadvertently taken for venereal: but complaints originating from this cauſe, are entirely analogous in their appearance, duration, and ſymptoms, to the diſeaſe we have had occaſion to treat of at note p. 25.—Theſe appearances may in general be imputed to the ſecond and third cauſe,—viz. incontinency, and uncleanlineneſs.

have

have produced complaints, which, to their great reſemblance to the Lues Venerea, have miſled many. But that the diſeaſe in queſtion is of a foreign extraction, generated in a foreign climate, and cannot be produced in this country, by one or all of the above, or from any other cauſe we are yet acquainted with, unleſs connection with an infected perſon. That it was a diſtemper peculiar to the climate of Hiſpaniola, and many other of the Weſt-India iſlands, as different diſeaſes are endemial to different countries—ſuch, for inſtance, was the ſmall-pox formerly in Egypt, and which did not make its appearance in Europe before the beginning of the ſeventh century, and was propagated throughout every kingdom in it by the Saracens. Its rapid diſſemination and hiſtory, is equally as unaccountable as that of the Venereal Diſeaſe.

From the above obſervations a queſtion naturally ariſes—Could the climate of *Hiſpaniola*, in the courſe of 300 years, have ſuffered ſo great a revolution, as to be capable

pable of producing Venereal Diſtempers at that period, and have no ſuch effect at preſent, even allowing it to have been endemic and epidemic in that climate?—We anſwer in the affirmative, ſetting out with a great ſaying of Ariſtotle's, and which is very much attended to in a late curious and valuable production of the learned Lord Monboddo, " every thing " exiſts that is poſſible to exiſt." It is poſſible then, that a climate may undergo ſuch a change, as to be capable of producing diſeaſes at one time, that it is not at another.

The hiſtory of phyſic evinces us fully of the truth of this, and experience itſelf vouches for the power of particular climates, in cauſing particular diſeaſes, and changing the conſtitution of men *.

For

* The changes which happen in climates, bear a ſtrong affinity to thoſe in the human body; for at certain times of life it is ſubject to diſeaſes that it is not at others—*e. gr.* The diſeaſes of infancy and manhood. Beſides, there are a claſs of diſtempers that only affect mankind once during the period of their exiſtence,

—the

For it is well atteſted, that the natives of ſome countries are liable to ſuch diſeaſes, as are ſeldom or never known in other countries. The ſudor * Anglicanus is an inſtance of this—a diſeaſe which proved ſo fatal to our countrymen at different periods of our hiſtory; and which firſt manifeſted itſelf in the year 1485, in Henry the VIIth's army at Milford Haven; from thence overſpread the whole kingdom with the rapid progreſs of an epidemic.—Marvellous are the accounts which writers give of it.—They ſay that none but Engliſhmen were affected with it.—Even by going over to France they did not eſcape it; and, which is ſtill more aſtoniſhing, their neighbours the Scotch were free from it; and in the moſt diſtant parts of Europe, the Engliſh only were affected, and foreigners not affected in England. From the above ſtrange relation, we have reaſon

—the ſmall-pox, meaſles, and ſeveral others of the exanthematous kind.

* Friend's Hiſtor. of Phyſic, vol. ii. p. 333, and Hume's Hiſt. of England, vol. iii. p. 330.

to imagine, that the cauſe of this unaccountable diſtemper was not to be attributed to any change or peculiarity at thoſe periods, in the Britiſh atmoſphere, but peculiar to the conſtitution of an Engliſhman, and purſued him through every quarter of the univerſe, where pleaſure or buſineſs had led him. He was no where exempt from it; no aſylum, no refuge, could prevent its aſſailing him. But why the Engliſh were alone ſubject to this diſeaſe, and its never appearing ſince in this iſland; or why Lues Venerea can be produced in the climate of Hiſpaniola, and the parts adjacent, and in no other quarter of the world we are yet acquainted with; and why the leproſy ſhould be ſo very prevalent in this country about three centuries ago, and now hardly a veſtige of it to be ſeen, are phænomena of equally difficult ſolution, and equally bewilder us in mazes of fancy and conjecture.

A

SHORT VIEW

OF THE

VARIOUS REMEDIES

RECOMMENDED IN THE

VENEREAL DISEASE,

From its firſt APPEARANCE in EUROPE to theſe Times;

WITH

GENERAL REMARKS on the preſent received MODES of TREATMENT.

IT has been an obſervation from time immemorial, that the greateſt diſcoveries which have been made in medicine, and every other branch of ſcience, were more the reſult of chance * than ſtudied reflection; and that thoſe arts and ſciences, which have had reference to the wants of mankind, have been more rapid in their

* It is to accident we are ſolely indebted for the diſcovery of the peculiar virtues of the Peruvian Bark, as well as of many other valuable remedies.

F 3 progreſs,

progreſs, than thoſe that have had pleaſure ſolely for their object; and in proportion to their diſtreſſes, their invention has been racked in order to find out means to alleviate them. Upon this principle it may naturally be preſumed, (which indeed happened) that the inceſſant ravages and devaſtation which the Lues Venerea committed on its firſt introduction into Europe, upon all ranks and degrees of men, excited their humanity, as well as curioſity, to ſearch for the cauſes, or at leaſt to know whether the ancients had taken any notice of it *. The violence with which it raged, called aloud for the interference of the

* By the introduction of the Venereal Diſtemper into Europe, the practice of phyſic certainly has received conſiderable improvements. From this it would ſeem, that we are only to be taught by the danger to which we are expoſed. Hence the art of war was greatly improved by repeated ſieges and battles, and every nation torturing their invention to find out new implements of deſtruction. So we find, that public calamities are often inſtrumental of great improvements in ſcience.

magiſtrate,

magiſtrate *, as well as the aſſiſtance of the phyſician: while the latter was ranſacking

* When the Venereal Diſeaſe made its appearance in Europe, it was looked upon to be a ſpecies of the plague, and was thought to ſpread its contagion by converſing with, or living together; and hence aroſe thoſe laws, which *Aſtruc* mentions were enacted in France, for the better regulation of the infected. "Thus there is extant a decree in the acts of the par-" "liament of Paris, bearing date the 6th of March, " "1496, by which ſuch as were infected with the diſeaſe, " "were prohibited, under pain of death, from conver-" "ſing with the reſt of the world, and obliged to re-" "tire into the ſuburbs of St. Germains, to places ſet" "apart for that purpoſe." The ſame precaution ſeems to have been obſerved in this iſland much about the ſame time; and proviſion was made for the public ſafety, in proportion to the prejudices each nation had conceived of this diſtemper; for at Edinburgh, we are informed, that the infected were expreſly commanded by the magiſtrates and town-council, under a ſevere penalty, (though not ſo ſtrict as the infliction of death on a non-obſervance of that order) to retire to Inchkeith, a ſmall iſland ſituated in the middle of the Forth, until proper aſſiſtance was ſent them.

In the year 1567, Lord Darnley, huſband to Mary Queen of Scots, was ſeized with a new and dangerous diſtemper, the ſymptoms whereof were ſo violent and unuſual, that though his life was in the utmoſt danger,

ſacking Galen and his Arabian commentators, in hopes to find in them ſome ſimilar traces of the diſeaſe, the other was buſily employed in enacting laws and forming regulations, either totally to prevent, or at leaſt to abate the terrible inroads it daily made on the human ſpecies; but neither the induſtry of the one, nor the vigilance and activity of the other, were capable to check its career; it ſtood in defiance both of medical and magiſterial interpoſition. The mineral and vegetable kingdoms were in vain ſearched into to diſcover, if poſſible, a remedy for the diſeaſe. The infected received no fur-

no proper remedy was known or applied; but after languiſhing ſome weeks, the vigour of his conſtitution ſurmounted its malignity. Biſhop Leſly affirms that this diſeaſe was the French-pox. *Keith* 346, Note (6).

In that age, ſays Dr. Robertſon, in his Hiſtory of Scotland, Book IV. this diſeaſe was eſteemed ſo contagious, that perſons infected with it were removed without the walls of cities; and, on account of this diſtemper, Lord Darnley was carried to the Kirk of Field, ſtrangled, and afterwards blown up with the houſe by gun-powder, on Sunday night, the 9th of February that year.

ther

ther aſſiſtance from medicine, than a palliation of their ſymptoms, which were procured by copious evacuations and topical applications.—Nothing, in ſhort, that ingenuity could invent, or experience furniſh, but what was adminiſtered—but to no effect.—At laſt, the attention of all Europe was called to look at that ſoil, for a remedy, from whence the diſeaſe originated.

As early then as 1508, guiacum was imported from South America, and eagerly introduced into practice, as the only medicine that was uſed by the natives in the cure of the Venereal Diſeaſe, and was ſaid to eradicate it, without danger; and, therefore, was received with great expectations, as a preventative to mankind. — But whether guiacum merited the great praiſes that were then beſtowed upon it, and was really employed by the natives, as its introducers wiſhed to inſinuate, or whether it might be capable of curing the diſtemper in that country, and not in Europe, we remain ſtill very much in the dark about. It is not, however, an improbable circumſtance, that

that this might be the caſe; for it has been repreſented, that the Indians of North America cure the diſeaſe with ſpeed, ſafety, and ſucceſs, and that without the leaſt knowledge of mercury. Mr. Kalm, a native of Sweden, and Sir W. Johnſon, who were long reſident amongſt thoſe ſavage tribes, affirm, that they uſe the root of the plant lobelia *, in decoction †, with incre-

* Care ſhould be taken not to make uſe of the lobelia longiflora, inſtead of the lobelia ſyphilitica, the former being of a much more acrid nature than the latter.

Vid. Characteri in Linnæi, Gen. Plantar.

† They take the roots of four, ſix, or more plants, either freſh or dried; then waſh and boil them in a gallon and a half of water; of which decoction, the patient drinks every day, if his conſtitution will ſuffer it, a quart in the beginning, gradually increaſing the doſe till he can no longer bear the purging excited by it; then he leaves it off for a day or two, and if neceſſary, continues it again, till he is perfectly well. This method, in about a fortnight, or three weeks, at the utmoſt, puts a total ſtop to the diſtemper. The Indians not only drink this decoction, but they alſo waſh and bathe with it the parts affected. During a courſe of this remedy, they confine themſelves to a ſimple diet, eſpecially vegetables; though, occaſionally, as circumſtances require, they are allowed to eat animal food.

dible

dible ſucceſs in every ſtage of that malady. Nay, they even look upon the diſeaſe, as one to be the eaſieſt dealt with; even though it be ſo inveterate that the patient is half rotten, and inſupportable to be approached, he is in a very ſhort time perfectly cured, without return, unleſs a freſh expoſure to the ſame cauſe, or to his own inconſiderate debauchery. So quick is this ſanative plant, in ſubduing the moſt virulent pox, that the negroes, both men and women, from the moſt ſhocking condition, in ten days time, were generally ſo well recovered, as to return to their reſpective employments, and continued afterwards perfectly ſound.— It would certainly be an object of ſome conſiderable importance, to diſcover their method of cure completely; but this has not hitherto been attended to: we ſhould ſuppoſe that it might be eaſily arrived at, by making trials of the various plants that are found in thoſe parts, and particularly of ſuch as the natives are known to make the moſt uſe of. But however well atteſted theſe reports may be, however great their autho-

authorities, they have all failed on repeated experiments, in accomplifhing a cure in our hemifphere, when unaffifted with mercury.

Whatever may be the reafon of guiacum proving effectual in the Venereal Difeafe in South America, at that period, and not in this country at any period, is difficult to fay *; and whatever then might have been the remedy, it is certain that the fame mode of cure, as adopted by modern Europe, is now univerfally embraced by them; and their whole dependance, like ours, in that diftemper, is confined to mercury. It is probable, however, if fo, much to be lamented, that the natives, in wifhing to keep their ancient remedy a fecret for their conquerors, whom they, with great juftice, ftyled the tyrants of the world, have at laft

* The only folid reafon of its failing in this country, feems to be the difference of climates: but when we confider that we are poffeffed of fuch powers as are capable of heating the apartments of the fick to any degree of heat whatever, even to that of the region from whence the difeafe came, every objection on this head, muft be fatisfactorily anfwered.

loft

loſt ſight of it themſelves. Or, perhaps, their keeping it a ſecret from the Spaniards, might be owing to ſome old tradition prevalent amongſt them—to this purport—that if the remedy, which they poſſeſs, was once diſcovered to any but their particular ſtates, the charm would be broke, and its powers, as a ſovereign remedy, deſtroyed; on account of ſome ſuch ſuperſtition (ſo common in unenlightened nations) the world, very poſſibly, has been deprived of a moſt invaluable medicine. We might reaſonably have expected, amongſt the numberleſs diſcoveries of their cuſtoms and manners, that more attention would have been paid by the miſſionaries, and other prieſts, who were ſent over by the court of Spain, to the fully inveſtigating this ſubject, particularly as their health and pleaſures were both ſo materially concerned.

We have certainly them alone to blame for our being ſo little acquainted with the original hiſtory and cure of this diſtemper; they neglected embracing the only opportunity of having a more accurate knowledge

of

of it, when this vaſt country was firſt diſcovered.

The reaſon, however, appears evident—they followed the foot-ſteps of their co-adventurers, whoſe chief object, as a celebrated Northern writer obſerves, " was in " amaſſing fortunes, that they might " quickly return from a remote unhealth- " ful country, which they conſidered as a " ſtate of exile *."—Conſequently their attention, their meditations, were more engaged in the mines of Potoſi, than in the foreſts of Loxa.

China-root and ſarſaparilla, were, likewiſe, introduced into practice much about the ſame time; and thirty years after guiacum. The former of thoſe was firſt brought by ſome Chineſe merchants to Goa, the capital of the Portugueze ſettlements in the Eaſt Indies, in 1535, and from thence it was ſoon imported to all parts of Europe. Veſalius is the firſt who takes any notice of its virtues, in his epiſtle *De Radice Chinæ*; in ſpeaking of it, he obſerves, that while he

* Robertſon's Hiſtory of America.

attended

attended the hoſpitals at Venice, under the principal phyſicians of that city, this root was then made uſe of in that diſeaſe, and great things were expected from it; but in that they were deceived, for it merely anſwered the intention of a ſudorific, and procured a temporary relief of the ſymptoms which again appeared on the ſlighteſt irregularity. But a very fortunate circumſtance occurring, recovered the loſt reputation of this medicine; and its virtues were again, for a time, eſtabliſhed, by no leſs a character than the imperial Charles the Fifth, who, on account of a violent gouty affection, the remains of a Venereal complaint improperly treated, had gone through a compleat courſe of guiacum, both in decoction and in ſubſtance, without any alleviation of his miſery: at laſt, on his own accord, and contrary to the approbation of his phyſicians, determined to make trial of the efficacy of this root at Bruſſels; and though not perfectly cured of his diſtemper, found himſelf ſo much relieved from its uſe, that it was afterwards eſteemed

a panacea all over the continent. But how changeable is the fortune of a new medicine, which was truly exemplified in the China-root, for it again fell under its former diſgrace.—Sarſaparilla and ſaſſafras ſuffered the ſame revolutions in their reſpective reputations, as guiacum and China-root had experienced before. Sometimes they were eagerly introduced by practitioners, and at others entirely neglected; in ſhort, their changes were alternate, depending as much on the whim and caprice of faſhion, as on the credit and fame which their reſpective introducers ſupported in the world.—Every vegetable that could be thought of, either the produce of thoſe, or more diſtant climes, and eſteemed the leaſt efficacious, were employed; but none of theſe, upon experience, were found to anſwer, by any means, the high encomiums which had been beſtowed upon them: they loſt all the reputation they had ever acquired, only palliating the diſeaſe for a time, which, on the leaſt irregularity of the diſeaſed, broke out a freſh, with additional violence, and baffled

baffled all their hopes of ever accomplifh-ing a perfect cure. At laft, a remedy, which they fo fruitlefsly fought after in the learned volumes of antiquity, the Chemift's found in mercury, the favourite fubject of fo many of their operations. But at what period this all-potent mineral was firft re-commended in Venereal diftempers, or who its introducers were, has afforded mat-ter for much difcuffion. The greateft authorities * feem uniformly to agree, that it was not employed before the year 1518, which was twenty-five years after the dif-eafe had manifefted itfelf; when John de Vigo †, phyfician to Pope Julius the Second,

* Friend's Hift. of Phyfic, Vol. II.

† It muft create our aftonifhment, when we confider the analogy between fome of the fymptoms of the le-profy, (a difeafe very well known at that time in Europe) and the Venereal diftemper, that mercury was not thought of before; and that a period of twenty-five years fhould elapfe, before it was adminiftered for this difeafe. For we are informed, that as early as 1276, this remedy was ufed in the leprofy, by Peter the Spaniard, who was afterwards created Pope John the Firft. He is acknow-ledged to be the firft European, who made ufe of it in

 medi-

Second, wrote a treatiſe on the Venereal Diſeaſe, wherein he recommends mercury in form of ointment, with which all the body was to be anointed: this deſperate remedy, agreeable to his account, cured the diſeaſe in a week, by producing a violent ſalivation.—He likewiſe deſcribes a mercurial cerate, for the ſame purpoſe, the good effects of which he had experienced a thouſand times, and was more eaſy to the patient than ſalivation; more ſecure in its operation, and in the event, equally as effectual: but the mode of preparing or uſing thoſe medicines, he takes no notice of.—The honour of uſhering in this medicine has likewiſe been attributed to Jacobus Carpus, a contemporary of Vigo's; but whoever of them deſerves that credit, they were both very ſucceſsful in their practice at Rome, and acquired large fortunes; particularly the latter, who, at his death, be-

medicine; and he, no doubt, muſt have learnt the mode of uſing it, from the Arabians, who were the firſt that ventured to employ mercury to deſtroy vermin, and for foulneſs of the ſkin.

queathed

queathed 40,000 crowns, besides a great deal of other personal effects, to the Duke of Ferrara, his friend and patron. But whether this mode of administering mercury died with them, or if they were as successful as has been represented, we are not informed.—It is, however, certain, that mercury got into great disgrace after their death. It was never universally known in their time, owing to their keeping it so great a secret from the rest of the practitioners on the Continent, prevented them from using it, as a remedy, in the Lues Venerea. Mercury was first employed by practitioners, in the form of ointment, in this disease: and so timid were they in using it, that the proportion of mercury was scarce one-fortieth part of the other ingredients. In this they acted like honest men, in employing, with caution, a remedy of such a problematic nature, in a distemper, of which the annals of medicine had not at that time taken any notice of. But they carried their pusillanimity to too high a pitch; for by prescribing it in such trifling

quantities, the diſeaſe gained ſo much ground, that three-fourths of their patients were either carried off by the violence of the diſeaſe, before the medicine could have any effect; or were otherwiſe very much disfigured, that they became ſo offenſive and diſagreeable, as to be ſhunned and excluded ſociety. The regulars being ſo often diſappointed in accompliſhing a cure, that at laſt the diſeaſe was entirely deſerted by them, and got into the hands of the empirics. The deſperate and mutilated ſtate of thoſe unhappy victims, opened a fine field for thoſe rapacious pretenders, to impoſe upon the credulity of the people. In all countries, indeed, it is too often to be lamented, that deſperate diſeaſes are left to that ſet of men who have no characters to loſe, and who will not ſtop in employing any remedy, however uncertain, or however violent, in order to attempt a cure. In this, no doubt, they ſometimes ſucceed; but in the diſeaſe in queſtion, they run into the oppoſite extremes of the regular practitioners; and by

by throwing in ſuch large quantities of mercury, produced ſuch ſudden and violent ſalivations, that more fell a ſacrifice to the remedy than the diſtemper; inſomuch that ſcarce one of a hundred, who went through the mercurial courſe, as preſcribed by them, was completely cured; the diſeaſe, for the moſt part, returning with redoubled violence, which commonly carried off the unhappy ſufferer, and relieved him of his miſery.

The fatal effects which conſtantly followed the adminiſtration of this mineral, as recommended in the early periods of the diſeaſe, occaſioned its being, if not wholly rejected from practice, at leaſt, in a great meaſure laid aſide, for near half a century; and the different roots, ſuch as *China*, *Guiacum*, &c. were again uſhered into practice; but met with (as might be expected) the ſame train of ill-ſucceſs which we have remarked before. Practitioners obſerving this, and taking it ſeriouſly into conſideration, they a ſecond time ventured upon the uſe of mercury; and being aware of the rock which their predeceſſors and the empirics

pirics had ſplit upon, were determined to employ it, neither with the caution of the one, nor in the raſh inconſiderate manner of the other; and by adopting this rational plan, they ſucceeded, after many vain and fruitleſs attempts.

Mercury is employed at preſent in a great variety of forms, difference of opinions prevails with regard to the mode of admiſtring its numerous preparations *. The advocates

* Dr. Kirkland † is of opinion, that the more ſimple the preparations of mercury are, the better; that exceedingly ſmall doſes of them continued a length of time, are fully ſufficient to anſwer as an antiſyphilitic, and for every other purpoſe in which it can be uſeful; and that large and active doſes of this mineral are not only unneceſſary, but often violently pernicious, though they may produce a ſpeedier relief from the diſeaſe; yet their ſubſequent conſequences are more deſtructive to the conſtitution than the malady itſelf. The Doctor farther ſays, that he is inclined to believe, from a ſucceſsful practice of many years, that ſmall doſes of mercury adds to its efficacy.

The preparation which the Doctor has been in uſe to adminiſter, and ſpeaks highly in praiſe of is—a ſcruple of quickſilver, rubbed down with two drams

† London Medical Journal, Vol. vii. Art. 1. for 1786.

vocates for each, aſſigning their reaſons for that which they adopt in preference to any other.

drams of ſtarch, then made into a maſs with mucilage of gum arabic, and divided into twenty pills, two of which are to be taken daily, except in thoſe days which the bowels are opened—for he recommends a gentle purge to be given weekly during the cure, (if the medicine has not that effect) in order to prevent the mouth from being affected. This courſe (the Doctor ſays) perſiſted in for three or four months, will cure every inſtance of Lues Venerea. This manner of proceeding may certainly ſucceed in caſes where the diſeaſe puts on a mild appearance, or where there is any averſion in the conſtitution to mercury, when the ſmalleſt doſe of the moſt gentle preparation, produces the moſt diſagreeable effects. But were we to truſt to this mode of adminiſtering mercury, where the diſtemper has laid deep root in the ſyſtem, or where parts of conſequence are in danger of being deſtroyed, our patients would be in a ſad diſfigured ſtate, before the violence of the diſeaſe could poſſibly be checked. The Doctor wiſhes to avoid an appearance, which of all others, in my opinion, is anxiouſly to be looked for—that is an affection of the mouth. For we can aſſert from practice, that Venereal Ulcers will frequently not put on a healing appearance until the mouth becomes ſore: and I have ſeldom found, that patients were perfectly free from a relapſe, who were cured without ſome

 affection

other. It is, however, certain, that different preparations of this medicine, and different modes of uſing it, ſuit different temperaments; for it is well known, that very great varieties, in the operation of mercury, ariſe from peculiarities in conſtitutions. Some, for example, are eaſily affected * with this mineral, while others, on the contrary, are acted upon with difficulty only. It is moſt agreeable to ſome

affection of the mouth; and that thoſe perſons are commonly longer in getting rid of the diſeaſe, where this appearance is with difficulty produced. In general we would preſume, that to ſupport a gentle ſoreneſs in the mouth and gums, during the exhibition of mercury, is adviſable. From theſe circumſtances it would appear, that there is a kind of connection between the ſtate of the ſalivary glands, and the Venereal irritation; and that inflaming theſe glands to a certain degree, and for a certain period, (like cutting upon a node) will deſtroy the Venereal irritation: or perhaps, the affection of the ſalivary glands by mercury, is no further connected with the Venereal virus, than as it ſhews as a mercurimeter, the degree of mercurial ſtimulus in the ſyſtem.

* One grain of mercury will do more for one man than fifty with another. I have been told of a lady who was ſalivated by taking a quarter of a grain of calomel only.

con-

constitutions to take it internally, in form of pills, bolusses, &c. and to others, whose intestines are very irritable, and easily acted upon, in form of ointment to be applied to the extremities. Therefore this Herculean remedy must be administered in such a manner, as best agrees with the age, constitution, and condition of the patient, as the judgment of the attendant practitioner shall suggest; who in every case will make choice of that preparation, and of that mode of application, as they think most conducive to the benefit of their patients.

Previous to the administration of mercury in any form, the following particulars ought to be taken into consideration. Whether our patient is affected with any putrid, nervous, or inflammatory complaints, &c. In all these cases, the use of mercury does not only prove hurtful, but in several instances, where its use has been persisted in, even fatal. Therefore attention to the removal of these disorders, ought to be previously paid to the use of this mineral. But, indeed, there is an allowable exception to this rule; for if the Venereal symptoms prevail

prevail much, though the patient is afflicted with one or other of the above complaints, and the ſoft parts in danger of being conſumed, particularly thoſe of the mouth, an immediate recourſe to mercury is indiſpenſably neceſſary, but proper medicines ſuited for the removal of thoſe affections ought to be conjoined with it.— If the patient's ſtrength is much exhauſted from any preceding illneſs, or if he is naturally of a weakly delicate conſtitution, a healthful country air, with aſs's or cow's milk as it comes from the animal, are one of the firſt requiſites to be attended to, before a mercurial courſe is ventured upon. The milk likewiſe of a healthy woman is found to be one of the greateſt reſtoratives for enfeebled and debilitated patients. His diet in other reſpects, ſhould conſiſt of whatever is of light and eaſy digeſtion; he may drink occaſionally a few glaſſes of any generous aromatic white wine, as madeira, old hock, calcavello, &c. Riding on horſeback two or three hours a day will greatly aſſiſt the above regimen, by enlivening

enlivening the ſpirits, and otherwiſe giving firmneſs and agility to the whole body. If medicines are required, they ſhould be of the tonic kind, ſuch as Peruvian bark, vitriolic elixir, &c. If he is low-ſpirited, which oftener occurs in Venereal Diſtempers than we are aware of, particularly with thoſe whoſe conſtitutions we have been delineating, preparations of iron, with that powerful vegetable tonic the bark, has been found an excellent, and indeed the only remedy: theſe, with cheerful company, will greatly contribute to recover the ſtrength, and recruit the ſpirits neceſſary for enabling the patient to bear the uſe of mercury. But it not uncommonly happens, that weakneſs and low-ſpiritedneſs are the immediate conſequences of the Venereal poiſon lurking in the habit *. In a caſe of this

* I had lately an inſtance of this—An amiable young lady contracted a Venereal complaint from her huſband, above a twelvemonth before ſhe conſulted me, and went then through a mercurial courſe, and was thought perfectly cured. About eight months after, ſhe found herſelf extremely weak and much debilitated,

this deſcription, mercury will be the only ſtrengthener, and its uſe ought not to be delayed a moment. If, however, the patient enjoys a good ſtate of health, no preliminary method, in my opinion, is required. Aſtruc recommends a long and tedious preparative proceſs, even to patients otherwiſe healthy, and to which few of our modern patients would, or have any occaſion to ſubmit to: Sydenham, on

bilitated, her appetite entirely gone, lowneſs of ſpirits, accompanied with religious horrors, a dreadful, though not an unuſual ſymptom in this hydra. I put her under a courſe of Peruvian bark, with valerian, ſteel, and other nervous and tonic remedies, as generally recommended in thoſe complaints. She continued their uſe for ſome time with great attention, but to no effect, the diſeaſe rather increaſing. I then thought it was requiſite (being acquainted with the hiſtory of her caſe) to try a mercurial courſe, imagining that thoſe appearances were in conſequence of the ſilent ravages the Lues Venerea commits on the conſtitution, without any apparent characteriſtic of the diſeaſe being preſent; which really fell out as I ſuſpected: for in about a month's time, her appetite, ſtrength, and ſpirits were reſtored; and by perſevering a few weeks longer in this treatment, ſhe now enjoys a ſtate of perfect good health.

the other hand, reprobates all preparative methods; and in his *Epiſtola ſecunda Reſponſor de Morb. Vener.* aſſerts, that they ſhould always be omitted as injurious. But as Venereal practice (much to the honor of modern phyſic) is ſo much altered and improved ſince the periods of theſe two great authorities, their opinions relative to the treatment of the diſtemper, is nearly become obſolete.

The next thing to be conſidered, is the proper ſeaſon for entering upon a courſe of mercury. It has been a general obſervation, that the Venereal Diſeaſe yields eaſier to a good treatment in warm and dry climates and ſeaſons, than in cold and damp ones: this is the reaſon, that has rendered Montpelier ſo famous for curing the moſt obſtinate and confirmed Lues *: this is likewiſe the reaſon, that people who are not cured of Venereal complaints in the northern parts of Europe, are ſometimes cured by removing to the dry fine air of the South of France, Italy, and Portugal.

* Swediar on the Venereal Diſeaſe.

Were

Were we always able to chuſe a ſeaſon, the ſpring and autumn ought equally to be preferred to the ſcorching heat of ſummer, and the chilling cold of winter, provided the circumſtances of the caſe will admit of delay, otherwiſe no attention is to be paid to ſeaſon. The coldneſs of the ſeaſon, &c. may be remedied by confinement to the houſe, and the heat regulated agreeable to the feeling of the patient; but if his buſineſs or circumſtances of life oblige him to go out in cold damp weather, he ſhould pay the ſtricteſt attention to his clothing, and conſtantly wear under his ſhirt a waiſtcoat of calico or flannel, and by all means to avoid wet feet.

It is now univerſally allowed, that mercury is the only remedy in the Venereal Diſeaſe; but what its operation is, or how it cures the diſeaſe, has been long a point undiſcuſſed, & *ſub judice lis eſt.* A queſtion, therefore, naturally ariſes—How it acts on the Venereal virus? Whether by deſtroying its quality, or, by producing an evacuation,

evacuation, expelling it out of the ſyſtem? Each of theſe opinions have had their reſpective votaries. Among thoſe who rather adhere to the latter, is the learned and ingenious Dr. Cullen, who ſuppoſes, that mercury acts as a univerſal evacuant, which changes the whole maſs of fluids, and evacuates in particular any foreign matter that may be mixed with them; and the ſhorteſt way, ſays the Doctor, in producing this effect, is probably by exciting a diaphoreſis: as a proof of this, he introduces in his Lecture on Syphilis, the following very intereſting medical anecdote.

* "An officer, being in a campaign, "was afflicted with a Lues, inſiſted, in "view of battle, upon being immediately "freed from his diſeaſe: the regimental "ſurgeon, in compliance with his ear- "neſt entreaties, anointed him at once "from neck to heel, uſing it to ſuch a "quantity, as contained an ounce of

* Cullen's Lect. on Syphilis, in manuſcript, 1776.

"quickſilver

"quickſilver in one night. The conſe-"
"quence was, that the patient broke out
"into a moſt profuſe and continued ſweat,
"which, in a few days removed all his
"ſymptoms. I will not vouch for the
"truth of this, nor do I propoſe it,"
continues that admirable practitioner, "for
"your imitation. If we may truſt to
"it, it points out the good effects that
"are to be derived from uſing mercury,
"ſo as to ſupport all the outlets; and this
"may be obtained, by employing acrid
"preparations of it, which promiſe to be
"good remedies. Hence we may account
"for the good effects of corroſive ſubli-
"mate*, which, though a valuable reme-
"dy,

* My late worthy and ingenious friend Mr. Clare, applied this active and powerful mercurial preparation with the happieſt ſucceſs, in the form of a ſtrong ſolution in water, on the palms of the hands, and ſoles of the feet; with a very gentle degree of friction on either of theſe ſurfaces, the medicine is readily abſorbed, and preſently ſhews its effects on the ſyſtem.

By this mode of application, its deleterious action on the ſtomach and bowels is completely avoided, and the efficacy

"dy, is not ſo effectual with us, as has "been repreſented by Van Swieten, and "its firſt introducers into practice. Probably its failure in many caſes, may "have been owing to its determination to "the ſkin being checked by the patient "expoſing himſelf to the cool air, whilſt "he was under a courſe of that medicine; "and, therefore, if the cure be attempted "with that preparation in cold weather, "without confinement, we may be diſappointed."

This medicine we alſo imagine may fail from ſome peculiarities of temperament, which hinders it from affecting the ſkin—as we know there are ſome people in whom it is very difficult to promote perſpiration. However much this medicine may be held in diſeſteem, there are many inſtances on record, where it has been given with ſtrong decoctions of ſarſaparilla and mezereon,

efficacy of the remedy is no ways impaired—circumſtances of conſiderable moment in practice, and lead us to form a very favourable opinion of this novel manner of employing it.

under a ſtrict obſervance to a low diet, and with confinement to the houſe, and keeping warm, have removed the moſt ſtubborn Venereal complaints, where every other remedy had failed. Practitioners of late have preferred the milder preparations of mercury to this acrid one, on account of the violence of its nature; even when joined with opium, it produces effects of the worſt kind, ſuch as griping, purging, head-ach, &c. for which reaſon it is now almoſt totally laid aſide: however, I have ſeen it employed with great ſucceſs in Venereal eruptions of the ſkin, and in deep ſeated ulcers. I rather apprehend its failure is more owing to the injudicious mode of preſcribing it, than any fault of the medicine itſelf. It ought never to be given to the weak and irritable, nor to thoſe who are ſubject to pulmonic affections; but to the ſtrong and healthy, the ſublimate may be adminiſtered with great ſafety. The quantity to be begun with ought not to exceed one-ſixth, or at moſt one-fourth of a grain a day, at the ſame time diluting largely with

bar-

barley-water, decoctions of burdock, farfa-parilla, &c *.

With refpect to the operation of mercury on the fyftem, I apprehend, that it acts not fo much by evacuating the Venereal virus, as uniting with it chemically, and forming a compound whofe properties are rendered perfectly innocent, and entirely differing from, and independent of the qualities which either of the fubftances poffeffed before their union; and which afterwards may either remain for a length of time in, or be expelled the fyftem. This theory of its operation feems to be the moft rational of any yet fabricated.—For was it to pafs off by the fkin,

* Two, three, or four grains of corrofive fublimate, (or according to circumftances) diffolved in a quart of water, makes one of the moft elegant, and at the fame time moft efficacious injections in a Venereal Gonorrhœa, of any we are acquainted with. For this purpofe it far excels the boafted preparation of lead, copper, &c. which have all been fo highly extolled in that difcharge. For the above moft excellent injection, I am indebted to Mr. Blizard, whofe long and fuccefsful trials of it, confirms the encomiums we have been beftowing upon it.

a preparation of antimony would anſwer the purpoſe more effectually—Was it to be expelled the ſyſtem by the inteſtines, we are provided with much better purgatives.—Or did its good effects depend on an increaſed ſecretion of ſaliva, tobacco might equally anſwer that intention. I flatter myſelf, that this theory will appear to be well grounded, on the conſideration, that mercurial applications will cure local affections. By advancing this doctrine, we would perhaps be able, not only to account for a few grains of mercury relieving ſometimes the moſt excruciating pains of the bones; but alſo why mercury, taken internally, removes Venereal Ulcers without any external application.

In exhibiting mercury, one material circumſtance is to be attended to—the quantity to be introduced; this has likewiſe been a ſubject of debate. If we admit, that it has the power of uniting with the virus, wherever it meets it, and deſtroying its deleterious qualities, it ought not to be given in ſuch proportions, as to be

be expelled the ſyſtem by purging, immoderate ſweating, nor by an increaſed ſecretion from the ſalivary glands.—Salivation therefore, but under certain circumſtances which we ſhall preſently ſpeak of, ſhould always be avoided, being undoubtedly a tedious, cruel proceſs, and unneceſſary for the cure, both from *Analogy* and *Experience*.

From *Analogy*—If mercury is adminiſtered in ſuch a quanity, as to paſs off by any of the different excretories of the body, we are diſappointed in our expectations: *ex. gr.* We exhibit Peruvian bark for the cure of intermittents: if it is carried off by ſtool, we add opium to prevent its purgative effects. Therefore we give mercury with a view, that its action ſhould deſtroy the effects of the Venereal Poiſon, by a ſpecies of attraction, which takes place between them in the body. It is evident then, that the more mercury we can have to remain in the ſyſtem, in a given time, until the virus is ſufficiently ſaturated, the more certain ſhall we

be in deſtroying it. It ſhould, therefore, be exhibited in ſuch a manner, and in ſuch quantities, as to produce one or the other of the following appearances. 1ſt, A hardneſs, fulneſs, and a moderate frequency of the pulſe.—2dly, Fetor of the breath, with a ſoreneſs of the mouth and gums *.— Or

* As ſoon as the mercury affects the mouth of the patient, or occaſions an acceleration of the pulſe, we are ſure of the moſt eſſential point, viz. of its having entered the circulation, which is abſolutely neceſſary for deſtroying completely the poiſon lodged there. However, I have often ſeen this mineral cure Venereal Diſtempers, without either producing ſoreneſs of the gums, fetor of the breath, or any ſenſible alteration or effect whatever in the ſyſtem.

But theſe appearances are ſatisfactory and excellent guides to ſteer by, and in general ought devoutly to be wiſhed for. The diſappearing of internal Venereal Symptoms, and more ſo of external ones, is another not unequivocal ſign, that the mercury has exerted its action on the Venereal Virus. If Venereal Ulcers, which aroſe from an infected maſs, begin to heal, if pains of the bones begin to vaniſh, under the uſe of mercury, we are ſure of its having removed the effects of the Venereal Poiſon; but we cannot yet aſcertain, that every particle of this poiſon preſent in the body, is totally eradicated. In order to remedy this inconvenience,

Or 3dly, an abatement of the ſymptoms, without any of the preceding phænomena. We are poſſeſſed of no other criteria, whereby we can judge of the quantity of this mineral to be depended upon. Therefore, any one of theſe appearances is a ſufficient and ſatisfactory teſt, that the ſyſtem is under the influence of mercury. When we have got any one of theſe characteriſtics of its operation, there is no occaſion for puſhing it any further; ſince the ſupporting any one of them, for a few weeks, will carry off moſt inſtances of Lues, and even thoſe that are pretty extenſively diffuſed over the ſyſtem.

From *Experience*—This will warrant me in aſſerting, that the evacuation produced is often an obſtruction to the cure; for mercury cures ſooner, and with greater certainty, when the ſtrength is but little, than when it is much reduced by it: hav-

venience, the uſe of mercury ought to be perſiſted in for at leaſt two or three weeks, (according to the virulence of the diſeaſe) after every Venereal Symptom has entirely diſappeared.

ing ſeveral times bore teſtimony of the failure of ſalivation, in curing the diſeaſe, and when it was adminiſtered in ſuch a manner, as to produce one or other of the above appearances, with as little ſenſible evacuation as poſſible, ſucceed.

In whatever manner or form we are determined on to adminiſter mercury, ſalivation ought to be guarded againſt. For however ſtrongly its advocates may reaſon in favor of it, it is erroneous to imagine, that by ſalivation all the poiſon is carried off, and the diſeaſe by that means radically cured, juſt the contrary effect takes place. It is true, indeed, that if ſalivation is brought on, the patient will often find all his ſymptoms diſappear, and of courſe be induced to think himſelf cured; but ſome months, nay, ſometimes only a few weeks afterwards, the ſymptoms will return with increaſed violence. No doubt, but if the diſeaſe is of a ſlight nature, it may by this method be eradicated; yet, from repeated obſervations I may venture to affirm, that thoſe cures affected by ſaliva-

tion,

tion, never can or ought to be depended upon.

The means of preventing ſalivation, may be comprehended under the following heads.—1ſt, By beginning with mercury, in ſmall doſes, and increaſing it gradually, until there are evident marks of its having entered the circulation; and when theſe occurrences take place — by intermitting the uſe of mercury until they ceaſe.—2dly, By avoiding expoſure to cold or damp air, particularly at night.—3dly, By indulging the patient with a free and generous diet, and a moderate uſe of wine, if he is not naturally of a phlogiſtic habit.

By a careful obſervance of the foregoing rules, I think it is in general not very difficult to avoid ſalivation, and which few caſes that are truly Venereal, however obſtinate, can withſtand.

In the following ſituations, however, ſalivation ſeems inevitable.—1ſt, In perſons who are naturally very irritable, or ſuch as are rendered ſo by repeated courſes of mercury, in whom the ſmalleſt doſe, exhibited

exhibited in any form, immediately affects the mouth, and if persisted in for two or three days, produces salivation.—2dly, In those, when the disease is gaining much ground, and proceeding so fast, that the soft parts are in danger of being destroyed, and the patient cut off, or at least disfigured, by the violence of its effects.—In this case it would be extremely hazardous, to wait till its baneful influence is checked by the remedy administered in such a way as to avoid salivation.—3dly, In others again, where we cannot trust to their using it regularly. Many have objected to this last reason for employing salivation, in order to rid the patient of the disease, but with what propriety I cannot see, though perhaps I am as great an enemy to this mode of cure as any of its avowed ones; yet when we have got people to deal with, who are irregular in using what is recommended, and otherwise very inattentive to their health, even when the disease is making rapid progress in their constitutions.—Under these circumstances, after

after we have in the ſtrongeſt and moſt pathetic terms pointed out to them the impropriety of their conduct, and that their perſevering in it will be the irremediable cauſe of bringing miſery on themſelves, and transferring it to thoſe unborn, and perhaps of rendering them totally incapable of ever enjoying the pleaſures of the marriage-bed: after we have ſtrongly enforced theſe intereſting particulars, and they ſtill perſiſt in this improper mode of proceeding, a reſpect for our own character, and, what is more, the love of humanity authorize, nay, oblige us to uſe this violent method of cure, not from any predilection in favour of it, but from mere neceſſity: as on the contrary, ſalivation rather renders the effect of the medicine doubtful, and in courſe ought to be avoided, unleſs in thoſe ſituations we have been deſcribing.

AMONGST the various remedies which have been recommended in Venereal complaints, opium, though often prescribed for them with no other purpose than merely to alleviate pain or lessen irritability, yet its possessing antivenereal qualities was novel, and never suggested before the year 1779; when the specific powers of this celebrated medicine were accidentally discovered by Dr. Frederick Michaelis, Physician-General to the Hessian troops; and the circumstances which led him to this discovery are related by him, as appear in the sequel*. "A young gentleman, "who, after having tried a variety of mer-"curial preparations for a most inveterate "Venereal affection, gave up his business "in New York, where he then resided, "and went to England without hopes of "recovery. He there took large doses of opi-"um to ease his pain; its effects, however, "surpassed his most sanguine expectations, "for without using any other remedy, he

* Vid. London Medical Commentaries, Vol. I.

"found

" found himſelf perfectly cured within a " very ſhort ſpace of time. I no ſooner " heard of this extraordinary recovery, " than I became deſirous to aſcertain " whether opium would have the ſame " effect, where no mercury had been given. " My trials, for this purpoſe, were pretty " numerous, and in general attended with " great ſucceſs. They were made with all " the accuracy I was capable of. The " medicines were always given by the mates " of the hoſpitals, and I myſelf ſaw the " patient daily, and wrote down, upon the " ſpot, every change that occurred.—The " patients were ſo carefully attended to, " that I am certain they took the medicines " in the doſes directed; and equally cer- " tain that they took no other remedy." —The above, with about twenty other inſtances, the Doctor produces, to prove the ſuperior efficacy of opium over all other remedies in this diſeaſe.—He very candidly acknowledges, that it did not always ſucceed; but the proportion of the ſucceſsful caſes, to thoſe in which this medicine alone did

did not effect a cure, was as three to one; and among thofe in which it failed, there were many in which mercury proved equally ineffectual.

The immenfe quantities of opium which he gave his patients are truly aftonifhing. He has frequently adminiftered, from one grain, to two fcruples at a dofe, even to thofe who had never been accuftomed to it; and which is very remarkable, thefe enormous dofes often produced little or no fleep; and that if it had that effect at firft, it generally went off in a fhort time. But in what manner this catholicon acts on the Venereal Virus, he does not attempt to explain: nor, indeed, has its effects, which it produces on the human frame, been thoroughly inveftigated, or obferved with fufficient accuracy. It is, however, a prevalent opinion, that it diminifhes every fecretion, perfpiration excepted. Opium, as far as it induces fleep *, renders us infenfible of a moderate ftimulus; and, per-

* Dr. YOUNG on Opium.

haps,

haps, many of the phænomena attending it, may be accounted for from this insensibility. Hence, perhaps, it is, that most of our excretions are abated, or interrupted at that time; we neither, *ex. gr.* cough, hawk, spit, sneeze, nor evacuate by stool or urine. It seems to be owing to this, that many of our secreted liquors, which, though thin when they arrive at the excretory ducts, yet by the remora there, in our sleep becomes thick: witness the wax in the ears, the mucus in our mouth, nose, fauces, and intestines, they are all thicker after a profound sleep, probably by remaining till the aqueous parts are absorbed or evaporated: and hence, perhaps, it is, that perspiration, which is excited without any stimulus, proceeds fully as well asleep as when awake; nay, probably better, on account of the other excretions being then lessened. But the experiments made by Doctor Michaelis, tend to confute this, and establish a contrary hypothesis, *viz:* That the large doses of opium, which he gave to his patients, instead of diminishing the secretions, had an

oppoſite effect, for moſt of them made more urine than ordinary: and another very extraordinary effect it produced, which to the Reader will appear to border upon the *incredible*—was now and then an increaſed ſecretion of ſaliva, ſometimes amounting t[o] actual ſalivation. Another ſymptom, th[e] Doctor takes notice of, will appear equall[y] ſo, was, its ſometimes bringing on a mo[ſt] violent diarrhœa, particularly when grea[t] quantities of it were accumulated in th[e] bowels *. In whatever manner opiun[m] operates on the ſyſtem, it is not our pre-ſent purpoſe to enter upon—ſuffice it to ſay agreeable to the Author's account, it gene-rally proved a ſovereign remedy in th[e] diſeaſe. But however well authenticate[d] the above practice is, however reſpectabl[e]

* It ſeems to have been a conſtant rule with the Doctor, to bleed thoſe patients of a plethoric habit, previous to their commencing a courſe of opium, and to evacuate the bowels, if there was any indication for doing ſo; it being well known, that it would be highly incongruous, in a judicious practitioner, to adminiſter opium, when there were any impurities in the firſt paſſages.

and

and numerous the authorities * brought forward to ſupport it, it has not been attended, by no means, either in our hoſpitals in town, or in private practice with that uninterrupted flow of ſucceſs which its introducer has ſo ſtrenuouſly aſſerted.

As far as ever I have been able to judge of the effects of opium in the Venereal Diſeaſe, have briefly been, as follows †.—That

* Repeated ſucceſsful trials of this medicine were made in the Britiſh hoſpital, at New York, by Dr. Nooth, Meſſrs. Grant, Beaumont, Forſter, and Wier, ſurgeons. By Dr. Schopf, phyſician to the Anſpach troops. In England, by Dr. Saunders of Guy's hoſpital; the reſult of the laſt Gentleman's experiments were not followed (as far as I can learn) with ſuch a train of unequivocal ſucceſs, as Dr. Michaelis has repreſented.

† Opium, applied either in a very fine powder, or a ſolution of it in water to ill-conditioned ulcers, whether ariſing from a Venereal or ſcorbutic taint, is, perhaps, one of the beſt remedies the whole practice of phyſic can furniſh us with. The following inſtance, among the many I have been witneſs to, may ſerve to illuſtrate its efficacy in ulcers from the former cauſe. A Gentleman, 32 years of age, of a healthy robuſt conſtitution, conſulted Dr. Turnbull and myſelf, about four or five months ago, for a large deep ſpreading ulcer, with hard pro-

That large and continued doſes of it, joined with mercury, adminiſtered in Venereal

prominent borders, extremely ſenſible to the touch, attended with a conſiderable acrid diſcharge, which gave him exquiſite torture, and had covered, and was in danger of conſuming the whole glans.—Under theſe alarming circumſtances, mercury, both externally and internally adminiſtered, was had immediate recourſe to, without the leaſt effect, the ulcer continuing to ſpread and deſtroy the parts; but at laſt fortunately gave way to a ſtrong ſolution of opium in water, with which it was frequently bathed throughout the day; at the ſame time he took from three to ten grains of the extract. thebaic. combined with merc. calcinat. — By purſuing this courſe, together with giving him the bark in large doſes, at the end of a month he was perfectly recovered; but it was thought neceſſary to continue the medicine for three weeks longer, gradually diminiſhing the quantity of opium.

The circumſtances of this caſe points out to us that what mercury alone cannot accompliſh, may be affected by a judicious union of theſe two powerful remedies.—Another mode of uſing opium in ulcers, is, by means of vapour; this, joined with the vapour of camphire, has a moſt ſurpriſing effect on ulcers of a long ſtanding.

A reſpectable Spaniſh ſurgeon firſt informed me of this method of applying opium to ulcers, when I was in that kingdom, about five years ago.—And I believe that it is not at preſent generally known, or practiſed in this Iſland.

affections

affections of the bones, which often occasion (particularly at night, when in bed) the moſt excrutiating agony, are ſometimes attended with the moſt ſalutary conſequences.

That its principal effects are merely (as has been obſerved) Firſt, To mitigate pain. — Secondly, To diminiſh irritability.— Thirdly, To prevent the ſtomach and inteſtines from being ſtimulated and ſtrongly acted upon by ſaline mercurial preparations. Theſe ſeem to be the only good purpoſes that are to be expected from the uſe of opium in Lues Venerea.

Future experiments, and time the grand finiſher of all human events, muſt decide on this, as well as on every other ſubject. But the effects already obſerved, certainly juſtify us, in giving this new remedy a fair and candid trial, particularly in caſes where mercury cannot be uſed with ſafety, or where it has been employed without effect.

FINIS.